

# CITY OF COURTENAY

## Cultural Services Report

Fall 2019

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## Executive Summary

The Cultural Services Report offers an analysis of the four key organizations crucial to the delivery and success of Courtenay’s arts and cultural development.

Courtenay is an innovative, vibrant, and growing city that offers a range of lifestyle, and cultural employment possibilities. A cultural mapping project conducted in late 2016 estimated that between 4,000-6,000 cultural workers reside in the Comox Valley reflecting a density of cultural workers. A recent Vital Signs report (2018) noted **1,010** people work in the arts, culture, and film industry,<sup>1</sup> however it is unclear how individuals self-identified between primary and sub domains within the cultural sector.

Following a review of Courtenay’s key cultural assets – the **Comox Valley Art Gallery, the Courtenay & District Museum, the Sid Williams Civic Theatre, and the Comox Valley Community Arts Council**<sup>2</sup>– it’s determined that *all four have a limited capacity to sustainably deliver their services with the current funding available.*

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<sup>1</sup> Comox-Valley 2018 Vital Signs report

The economic impact of these organizations is promising and could be enhanced. Based on 2017 figures, the gallery, museum and theatre generated a combined revenue of nearly \$2,000,000.

In order to address the City’s roll with its cultural providers, the following **key strategies and considerations are recommended** for each of the four organizations evaluated:

- **Sid Williams Theatre:** The City could consider partnering with the Comox Valley Regional District to diversify revenue over a three-year period and develop a funding formula that reflects the Theatre’s regional role as a cultural provider. The same is true for the other cultural partners herein though to a lesser extent due to the wider engagement of performing arts.
- **Comox Valley Community Arts Council (Comox Valley Arts):** The Arts Council would benefit from a fee for service agreement and serving as a third-party marketer to oversee arts and cultural promotion throughout the

<sup>2</sup> Comox Valley Community Arts Council was not included in the financial analysis as they are not a direct client of the City of Courtenay (do not have a fee for service or operating agreement with the City at this time).

region--- leveraging the existing marketing they are successfully carrying out. CVA's services could continue to focus on creative skills and capacity building by offering professional development, training, and resource support to those that work in arts and cultural sector. It's recommended that funding support an additional 20 hours per week for an on-staff community coordinator on behalf of the City. They would also benefit from the provision of further office and programming space.

- **Comox Valley Art Gallery:** An increase in multi-year core funding from the City would enable the CVAG to meet the objective of providing public education and outreach in the community which is falling short of its potential at this time.
- **Courtenay & District Museum:** Leveraging the Museum's paleontology assets is a key strategic focus for the museum which will enhance cultural tourism in the area. Diversifying its revenue base and minimizing interest on loan payments could assist with the sustainability of the organization which is currently 44% City-contributed.

The following **general approaches** are also recommended for each of the organizations:

- **Marketing Investment:** Three of the cultural organizations in Courtenay are spending less than 5% of their expenditures on advertising or promotion, with the Comox Valley Art Gallery Society and the Courtenay and District Historical Society each spending only ~\$8,500 annually. Given that marketing efforts typically demonstrate a high ROI, it's recommended that Sid Williams Theatre Society, Art Gallery and Courtenay District Historical Society increase their marketing expenditures from current levels. All would benefit from Comox Valley Art's increased marketing role.
- **Maintaining Cultural Capital Assets:** It's key that the City continue to recognize its responsibility in maintaining cultural infrastructure and leveraging other government programs for support such as Provincial funding; the Federation of Canadian Municipalities; and the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund. Identifying and using non-traditional spaces for shop pop ups, and cultural amenity contributions via the developer approval process are all support-centered strategies worth considering for infrastructure maintenance.

- **Business Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation:** All four organizations would benefit from improved monitoring and evaluation especially related to ‘making the case’ for financial support. Ideas to incentivize this includes developing a cultural score card to evaluate performance, and City-provided partial funding every 3 – 5 years in its Operating Agreements to cover strategic planning expenses for its cultural partners.
- **Future Directions and Models:** There are several possibilities to consider as a strategy to better manage Courtenay’s arts and cultural resources.
  - The first approach is to develop an Inter-Municipal Working Group (staff representatives) that meet regularly with a view to carrying out a regional cultural planning process and to sponsor a community liaison. From there, the liaison (such as CVA) could assist in convening a community-led cultural roundtable reflecting the wider creative ecosystem of the Valley with a view to minimizing duplication, organizational overlap, and promote collaboration.
  - Another step would be to develop a regional grants program for arts organizations.
  - A further possibility is to centralize the earned-revenue capacity of cultural partners by examining the case for developing a (C3) community contribution company; the profits of which could benefit the four organizations.
- **Role of the City in Arts and Cultural Development:** The City has laid a foundation for cultural development, and has demonstrated its support of its cultural assets and the necessary evaluation. Carrying out a cultural plan is an essential next step through the Inter Municipal Working Group, to help guide investment and decision making over the next ten years.
- **Contextual BC Case Study Summary:** Included in this report is a case study summary of municipalities throughout the province that have successful partnerships with their cultural providers; those profiles offer a greater context and background for the above recommendations.

# 1. Introduction



## 1.1 About the Study

The City of Courtenay Recreation & Cultural Services Department commissioned Patricia Huntsman Culture + Communication in partnership with Nordicity to provide analysis of the business plans of the City's designated cultural organizations. This includes the Sid Williams Theatre Society, the Comox Valley Art Gallery Society, and the Courtenay and District Historical Society. While not a current designated cultural partner of the City, the Comox Valley and District Arts Council was also included in the analysis for the role they play in cultural service delivery.

The report specifically aims to:

1. Review the operations and financials of each cultural partner;
2. Determine what level of core services each cultural partner can provide in a sustainable manner;
3. Determine the optimal role of the City in cultural development; and,
4. Offer recommend directions for the future.

The scope of work included the following key components (described further in Section 3.1):

- A literature review;
- Interviews with City staff and cultural partners;
- Benchmarking of cultural services; and,
- Financial management and performance analysis.

Through these stages, recommendations were developed regarding the allocation of funding to the City's cultural partners, reporting relationships, organizational capacity, and the sustainability of planned service levels and are presented in Section 6.

## 1.2 About the Team

Patricia Huntsman Culture + Communication is a BC-based consultancy specializing in communications and cultural development. Patricia is a sought-after and respected voice at the forefront of culture-led economic and community development in Canada. She has more than 20 years-experience in leadership and senior management roles in the creative field.

Nordicity ([www.nordicity.com](http://www.nordicity.com)) is a leading international consulting firm providing private and public-sector clients

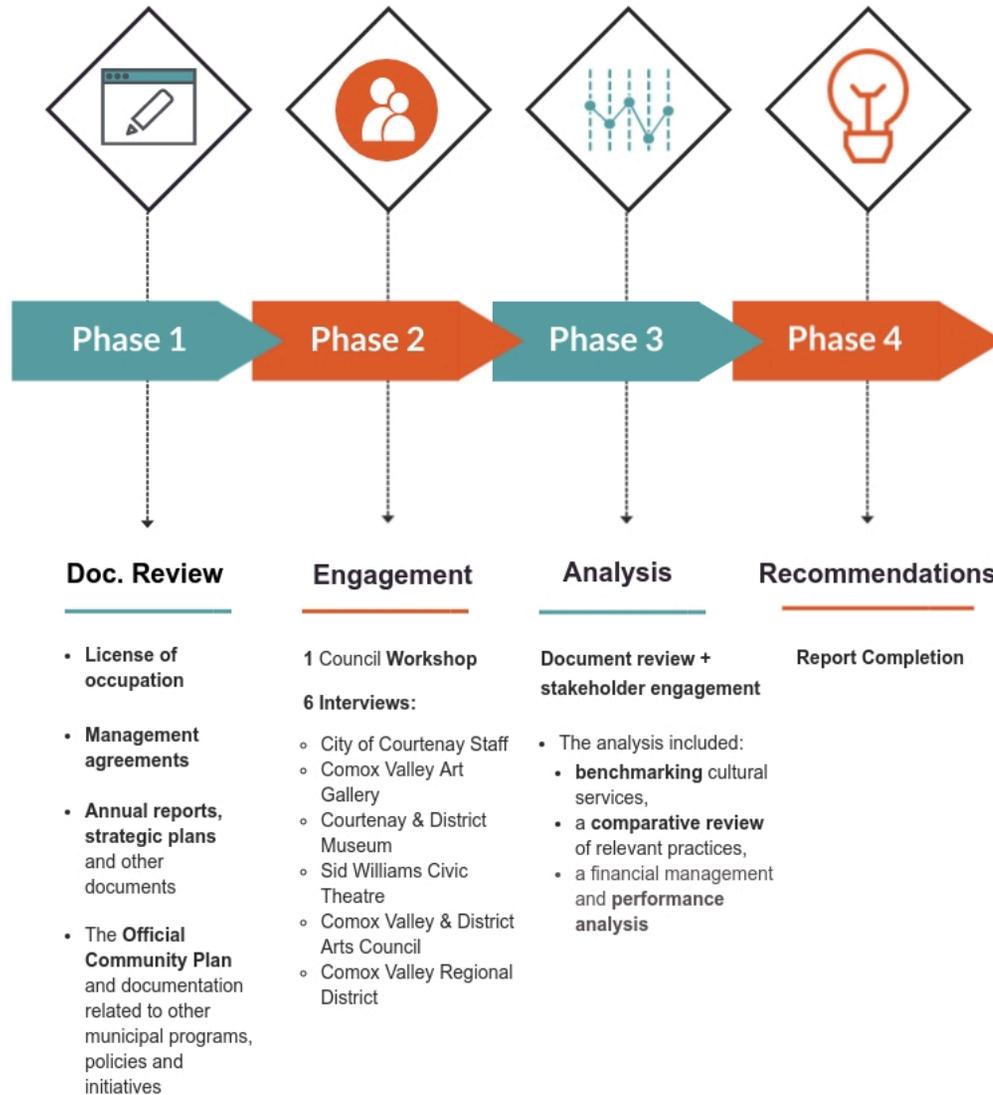
with solutions for Economic Analysis, Strategy and Business, and Policy and Regulation. They take a focus on four priority sectors: arts, culture and heritage; digital and creative media; information and communication technologies (ICTs) and innovation; and, telecommunications and spectrum.

Nordicity was founded in 1979, acquired by PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) in 1997, and re-launched as an independent entity in 2002, coincident with the acquisition of PwC's consulting practice by IBM. Today, Nordicity serves clients across Canada and the world from four offices based in Toronto, Ottawa, Vancouver and London (UK).



### 1.3 Methodological Approach

The Project Team employed a four-phase methodology.



**Phase 1** consisted of a document review which assessed two key streams of documents:

- Annual reports, strategic plans and other documents produced by the City’s cultural partners, so as to provide the Project Team with an understanding of the mandates and objectives of each partner organization.
- The Official Community Plan and documentation related to other municipal programs, policies and initiatives to allow the Project Team the ability to assess the services and activities of the cultural partners within the context of the City’s broader priorities.

**Phase 2** encompassed the stakeholder engagement, which saw the Project Team engage in six interviews and a Council workshop. Interviewees included: City of Courtenay staff; and representatives from the following:

- The Comox Valley Art Gallery
- The Courtenay & District Museum
- The Sid Williams Civic Theatre

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

- The Comox Valley Community Arts Council
- The Comox Valley Regional District.

Interviews with City staff and cultural partners provided an understanding of constraints and challenges faced by the City in supporting the cultural partners, as well as potential opportunities and future directions for that support. To assist in evaluating performance and capturing the current and historical positions of each cultural partner, an organization assessment outlining key information to acquire was provided to the respective cultural partners in advance of the interview, along with a self-assessment diagnostic tool: the non-profit life-cycle<sup>3</sup> which each organization completed. Samples of the organization assessment and non-profit life-cycles analysis are included in Appendix A of this report.

Following the data collection phases, the Project Team moved into **analysis (Phase 3)**, which saw the collation and synthesis of the information gathered in the document review and stakeholder engagement. The analysis included

benchmarking cultural services, a comparative review of relevant practices, and a financial management and performance analysis.

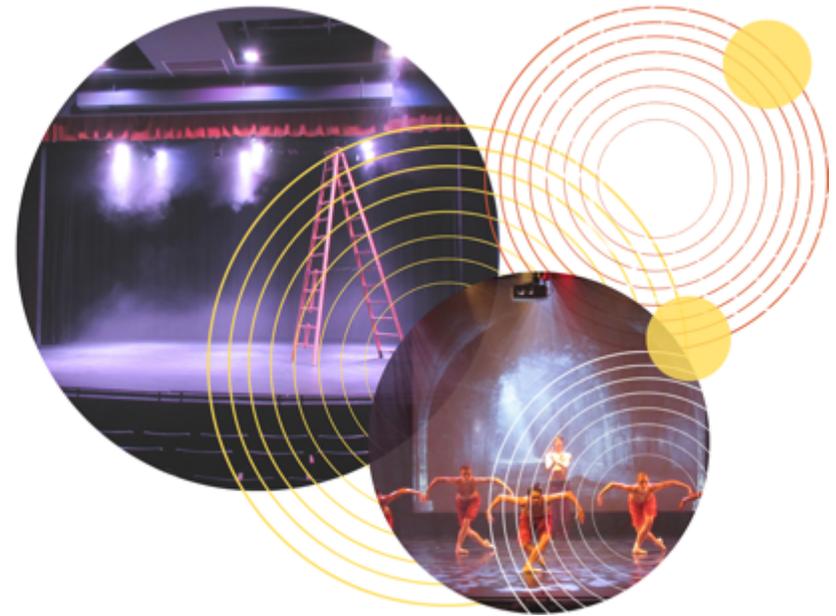
The **fourth phase** consisted of the Project Team developing the recommendations, and the complete report contained herein.



## 2. Context for Cultural Partnerships and Development

The following section provides a contextual backdrop by summarizing international, national, provincial, Indigenous, regional and local considerations that will shape arts and culture development in the Comox Valley. The following section can support communications to Council and the community and assist in furthering an understanding of sustainable creative ecology.

It offers a review and comparative analysis of global and Canadian best practices, industry trends and other driving forces in the external environment that in turn effect policy, assessment and planning. It also includes an internal assessment of key documents, policies, and plans and identifies current information gaps as well as policy linkages.



## 2.1 City and Regional Levels

### Profile: City of Courtenay

Situated on the east coast of Vancouver Island within the traditional lands of the K'ómoks First Nation, the City of Courtenay (approximate population 25,599<sup>4</sup>) was founded in 1915 as an agricultural and fishing community. Today, Courtenay has grown to become the urban and cultural hub of the larger Comox Valley (approximate population 65,000) and is still the largest municipality in the region.

Courtenay is an innovative, vibrant and growing City that works to provide opportunities and excellent services making its community a great place to live, work and do business. With many beaches, hiking trails, rivers, and lakes; Mt. Washington Ski and Alpine Resort; and world class golfing, the Comox Valley is known for its many year-round recreation and sports opportunities.

### Official Community Plan (OCP): A Blueprint for Courtenay

The OCP recognizes arts and culture through the following important ways:

- Consider arts and culture in the preparation of all City policies,
- Designate specific resources for the arts and culture,
- Play a role in providing physical infrastructure for arts and culture, including buildings, public spaces, and parks, support marketing efforts which include the arts and culture as a key attraction of the Comox Valley,
- Incorporate arts and culture, including public art, in urban design and planning,
- Provide leadership in building regional arts and culture strategies, involving municipalities, the Regional District, School District 71 and North Island College,
- Facilitate access to the arts and culture for all citizens, support youth as the next generation of artists, audience, organizers, and volunteers.

### Demographics

The Courtenay Official Community Plan<sup>5</sup> notes the following key demographic trends based on data cross-referenced with Stats Canada:

- An aging population due to a high number of retirees

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.courtenay.ca/assets/City~Hall/Council/Agendas/2019/2019-01-21%20Parks%20and%20Recreation%20Master%20Plan%20DRAFT.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.courtenay.ca/assets/City~Hall/Council/Agendas/2019/2019-01-21%20Parks%20and%20Recreation%20Master%20Plan%20DRAFT.pdf>

- Lower medium income and a high number of people relying on income from pensions

Within BC, it's typical for 18.3% of people to be over the age of 65, as opposed to the current 26.1% average in Courtenay. To accommodate the influx of retirees, the City aims to continue to assess and report on resident's quality of life and ease of access. They also aim to collaborate on a civic youth strategy, and create an advisory committee to identify and advocate for the needs of youth in the community.

#### City of Courtenay – Population Change<sup>6</sup>

| Age Profile    | 2011           | 2016           |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 0 to 14 years  | 3,530 (14.5%)  | 3,660 (14.3%)  |
| 15 to 64 years | 16,730 (69%)   | 15,265 (59.6%) |
| 65+ years      | 5, 285 (21.8%) | 6,675 (26.1%)  |

<sup>6</sup> <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=5926010&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Count&SearchText=british%20columbia&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=5926010&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&Data=Count&SearchText=british%20columbia&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1>

#### City of Courtenay – Demographic Change<sup>7</sup>

| Location  | 2011   | 2016    | %   |
|-----------|--------|---------|-----|
| Courtenay | 24,216 | 25, 599 | 5.7 |

While a closer look at the adult population (15 to 64 years) reveals an upward trend, cultural partners, City Council and Staff, and the community-at-large<sup>8</sup> agree that a shift in the community's profile has occurred which might not be reflected in the latest Census population data. The shift comprises the attraction of many young families to the region, and as referenced through interviews with the cultural partners, is being reflected in their respective programming in response to changing demographics and being family-friendly arts and cultural organizations. The shift also sees many creative workers migrating to the area

<sup>8</sup> Based on input received for this report from interviews, meetings with Staff, Council and cultural partners.

as well as those attracted to recreation assets, many of whom have an expectation of cultural amenities within the rural setting, especially around culinary arts.

### **Local Government Administration: An Asset-Management Lens**

Over the past five years the City of Courtenay has adopted an asset management framework for sustainable service delivery.

Local governments are responsible for a wide range of assets supporting core service delivery (roads, water and sewer systems) which also includes cultural capital assets.

Cultural capital assets include the infrastructure that supports arts and culture such as theatres, museums, art galleries and public art spaces and public art.

The goal of asset management is achieving “sustainable service delivery”: ensuring that current community services are delivered in a socially, economically, and environmentally responsible manner that does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sound Asset Management practices help minimize risks and long-term costs. This approach has extended into the management agreements with the local cultural partners profiled below, and appears to be taken into consideration in maintaining cultural infrastructure. In earlier years, funding allocations lacked parameters or guidelines and expected outcomes. More recently, Recreation and Cultural Services staff have worked on agreements with cultural partners in order to provide clearer role definitions between the parties.

### **Cultural Planning Linkages: Past and Present Developments**

In addition to the OCP, the recently released 2019-2022 Strategic Priorities for the City of Courtenay identifies:

*“‘continuing to support arts and culture’ within the third priority of ‘actively pursue vibrant economic development.’”*

This is an important step in cultural development for the City as it recognizes the strategic role of arts and culture beyond programming, and its integration with other areas of community planning, building from Courtenay’s foundational level of arts programming and provision of cultural facilities and assets.

## Previous OCP: Culture, Heritage and the Arts

Previous planning initiatives and staff reports have cited the strategies and actions below which have helped to shape and evolve Courtenay’s cultural development. While in some cases these initiatives may not have been fully completed, they reflect the intentions and characterization of Courtenay as a positive environment for arts and culture development:

- Enhance Courtenay’s reputation as the premier regional centre for arts and culture;
- Adopt and implement the recently-prepared Arts and Culture Policy, which offers a series of specific actions for the City to take (see Section 4.8);<sup>9</sup>
- Demonstrate how your community values, preserves and manages, for the benefit of the community, its cultural heritage and its built and natural, historical and national heritage.

It should be noted that in 2003, an Arts and Culture Policy draft was endorsed by the Council of the day but never

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<sup>9</sup> Although the OCP references an Arts and Cultural Policy, Council has yet to officially approve and adopt one.

formalized or implemented. Going forward, should the City choose to advance with a regional or local area cultural master plan, a cultural policy would form the foundation to provide strategic directions and guidelines for decision-making and investment.

## Culture and Recreation: City and Regional Levels

To promote social equity and community engagement the City recognizes that robust recreation programs, and arts and cultural programming is vital to the health and involvement of the community.

Survey data cited in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan<sup>10</sup> identified that *farmers markets and festivals or special events in a park* are leading cultural activities within the Courtenay (74% of those survey attend a farmer’s market, and 67% attend a festival or special event in a park). For Courtenay to be age-resilient in its approach to planning, accessibility and affordability are two key considerations for cultural events programming.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.courtenay.ca/assets/City~Hall/Council/Agendas/2019/2019-01-21%20Parks%20and%20Recreation%20Master%20Plan%20DRAFT.pdf>

When the Comox-Valley 2018 Vital Signs report surveyed over 1,000 diverse residents they determined the following top 5 commonly accessed amenities:

1. Local beaches
2. CVRD Trails
3. Provincial Parks
4. Municipal Parks & Playgrounds
5. Sid Williams Theatre

### City Investment in Arts and Culture

The City recognizes arts and culture as essential to community health and strength. They take a focus on funding major capital investments and ongoing support of arts and cultural activities. Currently, as noted in the OCP <sup>11</sup>, the City of Courtenay offers financial and in-kind support through the following:

- Direct operating grants
- Providing facility space, repairs and maintenance

- Licence to occupy and management agreements between City-owned buildings and arts and cultural organizations

The City is also moving towards current local government cultural planning practice of taking a creative ecosystems approach to its cultural development which is marked by a shift from a programmatic lens to an integrated and strategic lens in many aspects of municipal planning (e.g. tourism, economic development, local area plans, wellness plans, etc.).

### Cultural Services as Connector



<sup>11</sup>

[https://www.courtenay.ca/assets/Departments/Development~Services/Bylaw\\_2387\\_OCP.pdf.pdf](https://www.courtenay.ca/assets/Departments/Development~Services/Bylaw_2387_OCP.pdf.pdf)

Source: Image courtesy of the City of Kingston Cultural Services Department.

As such, an integrated municipal cultural service portfolio at both strategic and service delivery levels will see many ‘touch-points’ on culture both within City Hall and out in the community.<sup>12</sup>

### **Cultural Infrastructure and Place-Making: Key components of Cultural Development**

An important aspect of cultural development is place-making, the reflection of a community’s identity in its visual public realm and the activation of public spaces. The majority of commercial development has not been downtown however, the urban core of Courtenay has experienced a renewal of many cultural facilities that are all within walking distance of one another leading to an evolving cultural precinct or district.

It’s important to reflect that ‘place’ weaves in the naming of spaces and language considerations in keeping with Truth and Reconciliation and the decolonization of spaces in the public realm. The integration of Indigenous public art work

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in the form of totems within downtown is in keeping with this important recognition of place.

The Official Community Plan<sup>13</sup> notes that the City intends to make architectural aesthetics and place-making a key focus in their development planning, with sensitivity to their unique sense of place, history and character. This centers around ‘*ensuring the highest level of aesthetic design*’ through the following approaches:

- Define or redefine Courtenay’s visual identity,
- Establish a clear idea of what image Courtenay wants visitors to take home with them,
- An approach to buildings that expresses a feeling of civic pride,
- Ensuring that all development happens with care, in accord with locally-prepared standards,
- Require blank walls of large buildings to be detailed or landscaped.

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[https://www.courtenay.ca/assets/Departments/Development~Services/Bylaw\\_2387\\_OCP.pdf.pdf](https://www.courtenay.ca/assets/Departments/Development~Services/Bylaw_2387_OCP.pdf.pdf)

Past downtown cultural facility renovations include:

- The Sid Williams Civic Theatre
- Courtenay & District Museum
- The Courtenay Library
- Jubilee Square – open space and parking lot

Previous cultural infrastructure plans saw the completion of:

- The Old Fire Hall conversion to an Art Gallery – Duncan and 6<sup>th</sup>
- The City’s acquisition of the Museum on 4<sup>th</sup>
- Native Sons Hall on Cliffe Avenue

The City is also seeking strategies to link the downtown and eastern commercial development through projects like the Lewis and Simms Millennium Parks, and to continue preserving historic sites. They seek to designate 5<sup>th</sup> street as a heritage corridor.

A culturally sensitive project is currently underway by the K’ómoks First Nation. Weather and flooding are eroding traditional ancestral burial grounds and the Nation seeks to repatriate the remains and develop a Community Grave House. This effort is supported by some funding from the Comox Valley Community Foundation. Building a local

legacy together (both local governments and local First Nations) is essential to contemporary cultural policy and planning.

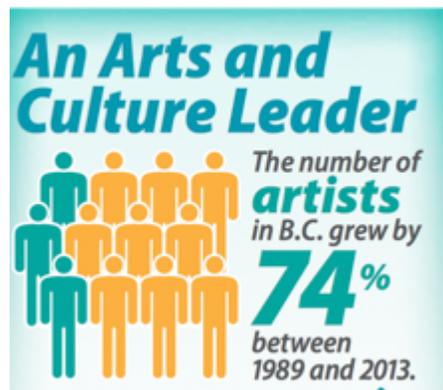
### **Regional Cultural Industry Profile**

“Cultural industry” is an umbrella term for areas of creative work and cultural production, such as: advertising, architecture and interior design, visual and applied arts (e.g. artisan crafts), fashion design, industrial design, performing arts, print media and publishing, film, radio and television and visual media (e.g. video games).

When the cultural sector is taken as a whole, it represents \$53.4 Billion dollars or 3.4% of Canada’s Gross Domestic Product—outperforming industries such as forestry, agriculture, and fisheries combined, as well as utilities, sport, and accommodation and food industries.

The reason the cultural industry has such a major economic impact in Canada is the shift from traditional sectors to creative and knowledge-based economies. These more recent economies demand less financial input (e.g. volunteer labour, no bricks and mortar) to generate their significant economic impact.

As such, many communities across Canada are trying to attract creative professionals and knowledge workers who are enticed by quality of life amenities, such as recreation, culinary scene, arts and culture. Local governments are also fostering and incorporating cultural development in their organizational culture either through direct staff representatives, cross-departmental teams and/or integrating into their planning initiatives.



87,996 jobs in cultural industry

24,800 artists

Generates more than \$5.7 billion into provincial economy

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, 2010-13

At this time, local governments in British Columbia are often saddled with the bulk of cultural investment in their communities, as the province has historically received the lowest amount of federal funding for arts and culture in Canada. While new funding through BC's recently announced Creative Economy strategy has been of

assistance the province is still one of the lowest spenders on arts and culture of all the provinces and territories, though again there is increasing investment. Similar to deferred infrastructure investment, this results in B.C. municipalities evaluating priorities and gauging optimal funding requirements to ensure community arts and cultural resources and assets can be maintained. (Hill Strategies, 2015).

A notable consideration for Courtenay is the size of its labour force; while the City is home to 26,599 people only 11,675 are within the labour force, which is nearly half the population. Similar to national figures, Courtenay statistics indicate a combined 3.9% of the population identify themselves as recreation, arts, entertainment and cultural industry workers. The City's leading employment sectors are the public sector, health care and social assistance, and retail.

Stats Canada: NHS Profile – Courtenay vs. BC – Industry (2016)

| Industry (NAIC 2011)                | Courtenay<br>(11,675) | BC (2,354,245)       |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Retail trade                        | 2,040 (17.5%)         | 266,265 (11.3%)      |
| Health care and social assistance   | 1,515 (13.0%)         | 249,030 (10.5%)      |
| Public Administration               | 910 (7.8%)            | 143,875 (6.1%)       |
| <b>Arts, Entertainment and Rec.</b> | <b>330 (2.8%)</b>     | <b>56,915 (2.4%)</b> |
| Information and cultural industries | 145 (1.2%)            | 62,235 (2.6%)        |

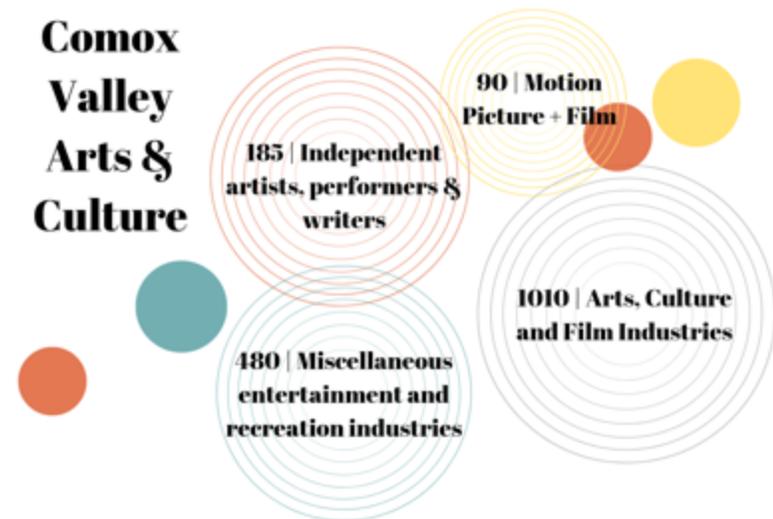
Stats Canada: NHS Profile – Courtenay vs. BC – Industry (2011)

### Insights into the Comox Valley: Arts and Cultural Industry<sup>14</sup>

Identification of cultural work should follow NAICS and be in keeping with Statistics Canada’s Cultural Resources Statistics Framework. A recent cultural mapping exercise

<sup>14</sup> Throughout the document ‘arts and culture’ are often used together, however, the reader should note that arts is a subsector of culture in keeping with the NAICS industry classification and Canada’s Cultural Statistics Framework.

conducted by Comox Valley Arts and other community partners, estimated the cultural workforce to be between 4,000-6,000 in the region and included a larger and more diverse sampling than the Vital Signs report which offers following update on the arts and cultural sector, displayed in the following infographic:



Few sectors of the economy have the potential to transform communities like the creative industries. Not only can they reshape a city's or region's image, but they are well positioned to become magnets for outside talent, and to boost the vibrancy and quality of life from which to provide an economic advantage over competing communities or regions.

Creative industries fuel a 'creative economy' – namely, one driven by ideas, innovation, knowledge, diversity, collaboration and creativity. This economy encompasses the creative industries in which ideas and intellectual property produce value and generate wealth.

Building on the idea that creativity and culture can be a generator of economic growth, local governments and cities around the world are directing more and more investment towards new cultural industries and districts. This includes public spaces whose cultural amenities are intended to harmonize different social interests and improve the quality of urban life. This response reflects the changing nature and role of cities and, moreover, the shift towards a service and knowledge-based economy. Indeed, creativity, human capital and the capacity for innovation are increasingly the means to measure whether a community is competitive –

both regionally and globally. These developments are, in turn, leading many communities to rethink:

- **The quality of place** in their communities and assess the urban assets that contribute to sustainable economic growth;
- **Their ability to attract the workforce talent** associated with this new creative economy; and,
- **Their broader cultural resources, amenities and facilities** by seeing them as strategic urban assets, which play an important role in cultural planning and an emerging new economy.

Culture is a key foundation of an economic development where the ability to innovate, problem-solve and communicate is both valued and rewarded. In communities such as Courtenay and the region, we understand that there is growing recognition of arts and culture as an economic engine and, in turn, growing demand to facilitate stronger connections between local arts and business communities. Increased public and private sector support of cultural enterprises and innovations – ultimately supporting the attraction of human capital to a locale that can offer near-

shoring<sup>15</sup> to larger centres such as Vancouver and Victoria. A notable contribution to bolstering the creative economy would be training and education opportunities such as theatre and film tech programs, as well as arts administration courses at North Island College.

## 2.2 Current Trends and Practices

### Arts and Culture Landscape in B.C. and Canada



Canada’s cultural landscape is changing. Understanding the broader context of these changes and their potential impact on planning and policy-making is key to ensuring a current

<sup>15</sup> “Near-shoring” is the practice of sourcing business inputs from nearby locations instead of off-shoring to another country. (e.g. using a network of workers on the West Coast- Vancouver-mid-Island/Victoria-San Diego)

and adaptive planning for cultural investment at local and regional government levels.

### Broader Context: What’s Ahead for Arts & Culture?

**Leadership in Truth and Reconciliation:** The Calls to Action identified in the October 3rd, 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report identify a number of specific actions that local governments and arts and cultural organizations need to consider in their community context, namely not the encouragement to include Indigenous artistic practice and participation but the expectation that this peer-based inclusion is present in the organization’s work. Further consideration for local governments is the reflection of place names and language preservation in keeping with the Declaration of the United Nations on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

**Lifecycle of Arts Organizations:** The 1970s in BC, in particular, represented a time of significant investment of arts and cultural organizations and related assets. Many arts organizations are maturing and are perceived to be preventing new entrants and growing organizations from

receiving increased funding. As such, many funding bodies are now trending towards, or at the least further considering, a life-cycle-based approach to funding (as opposed to artistic discipline). Arts organizations will need to focus on capacity-building in-keeping with life-cycle indicators and characteristics (e.g. start up, growth, maturity, decline/renewal, and termination, respectively). Defining the City's role in supporting capacity-building is an important consideration to the City of Courtenay.

**New Approaches to Art-making:** These new approaches are at odds with funding models. Partly generational and partly creative, new approaches to art-making and space requirements are generating more entrepreneurial instincts towards creating and sustaining artistic practices. In turn, creating spaces for new approaches is a further consideration for cultural planners.

**Social Practice:** Rapid scale prototyping to respond to community issues. As evidenced globally, and more recently in response to the U.S. election, artists and arts organizations are more actively responding to their societal context in rapid-scale production. The strength of this approach is demonstrating the relevance of the arts as a medium for the expression of social change, especially amplified through social media channels. An extension, as

shown in many US and UK examples, is using the arts as a strategic tool (one example: using architectural choreography with crane operators as part of a campaign to attract young workers to trades).

**New Operating Models eg. Epoch model:** While the life-cycle approach to funding is one aspect in the broader context of artistic and operational practice globally, new operating models are also being generated where a specific, temporary, and designed operational life-cycle is envisioned rather than the 'let's create it and continue indefinitely approach' Instead, an end date is set as a part of a collaborators' contract.

**Digital Strategies:** Today, enormous societal changes are underway largely driven by the emergence of new digital technologies. These technologies are driving behavioral and preference changes in audiences to where arts and creative content are becoming 'experiences' rather than commodities or services. As further detailed in the International Context section of this report, whether it is for creative content production or engagement purposes, digital is here and arts organizations must consider this as part of their mix. Typical digital strategy pillars for organizations now include:

- Creation/production
- Access/dissemination
- Marketing/engagement
- Sales/fulfillment
- Asset building

The introduction of the \$88.5 million Arts in a Digital World funding program of the Canada Council stresses an importance of cultivating creative ecosystems in communities that encourage partnerships between sectors such as tech, entrepreneurs and the arts.

**Generational Considerations:** Increasingly in the future, the maturing millennial demographic will become an important consideration. As suggested above, these audiences are driven by personal relations and human connections principally facilitated through social media and modern technologies. A future objective should be to implement targeted arts engagement strategies that are familiar with specific programming and service delivery initiatives.

**Changes to the Non-profit Landscape:** In 2011, Imagine Canada identified seven major ‘drivers’ that were having an effect on Canadian non-profit organizations in general and various governmental operational services in particular.

They are:

- The increasing importance and influence of social innovation in Canada;
- Structural shifts in the revenue base which supports the work of charitable and non-profit organizations;
- Shortage of talent to strengthen and lead charitable and non-profit organizations;
- Lack of growth in the number of volunteers to govern;
- Support and promote civic and community organizations;
- Heightened demand for transparency, accountability;
- Communication of impact and public policy engagement;
- The growing need for transformative partnerships among charities and non-profit organizations and with other sectors.

**Festivals and Audience Trends:** The City of Courtenay recognizes the expanding reach of festival-based and outdoor multi-arts delivery and participation as the main channel for cultural participation which also sees digital (and live-to-digital) experience emerging.



# Canadians attend performance art for:

84% | "entertainment/fun"

58% | "emotional/spiritual/intellectual stimulation"

57% | "learn/experience something new"



<sup>16</sup> The main personal benefits cited among participants in a recent large-scale survey of performing arts attendance in Canada.

**Creative Place-Making:** Creative place-making is an evolving field of practice that intentionally leverages the power of culture, creativity and the arts towards serving a community's needs. In a broader agenda, the goal is to create change, growth and transformation in a way that builds both character and a sense of place. Today, there is a major cultural policy and funding shift in the United States that positions community-driven arts at the center of its community planning and development.

**Family Arts:** Addressing how to best be a welcoming venue and/or arts organization to families is an increasing expectation of arts and cultural participants. This extends beyond offering programming and activities for a range of ages (which organizations should already be doing) and delves deeper into how organizations can take steps to make performances/activities appropriate so that they can be enjoyed and appreciated by all members of the group taking part.

**Accessibility Arts:** Removing barriers to participation and ensuring access to the arts is an increasing focus and expectation of government funders. This extends beyond the pre-requisite of physical access to arts and cultural

facilities and considers mental, visual and auditory, developmental and other sensory challenges. Integrated participation (i.e. not separate programming) is further encouraged to allow for a more fully immersed participation experience for those with accessibility needs. Accessibility and inclusion extends to pricing of arts and culture (ie. providing free experiences) and including broader narratives beyond traditional euro-centric art experiences or histories, and in turn, the welcoming of arts and cultural experiences reflecting many cultural heritages. New art forms are emerging that present art specifically for people with accessibility challenges (e.g. deaf theatre).

# Canadians cited **collective community** benefits of performing arts:

- 42%** | "Bringing energy and vitality"
- 38%** | "Improving quality of life and well-being of residents"
- 37%** | "Fostering a more creative community"
- 32%** | "Promoting economic development"



### 3. Cultural Partner Profiles

In keeping with the aims of this review report, the following section provides a snapshot of each arts and cultural partner— those organizations currently in a partnership or license to occupy agreement with the City of Courtenay as well as the Comox Valley Arts. This section provides summary information and the authors thank the arts and cultural organizations for the detailed information provided.



## 3.1 Comox Valley Art Gallery

### History of the Organization

The Gallery's origins are found in the Central Arts Alliance (CIAA), a group established in the early 1970's by area artists that operated under the umbrella of the Comox Valley Arts. The CIAA has been recognized by the Cultural Services Branch of the Province of British Columbia since its inception and has had status as both a British Columbia society and federal charitable organization since 1974. The Board of Directors of the CIAA voted in 1997 to change the organization's name to the Comox Valley Art Gallery to reflect the now core business of visual art exhibition programming. The CVAG relocated to a municipally owned building in 2005, and the gallery now features contemporary, experimental and applied art by regional, national and international artists, educational workshops, and retail space in the former Fire Hall in downtown Courtenay.

### Mandate

The Comox Valley Art Gallery is a regional public art gallery dedicated to exhibiting, interpreting and celebrating emergent contemporary art practice. This includes facilitating art education and critical conversation and

presenting programming that encourages an ongoing exploration of the arts and their role in shaping and clarifying our culture. We do this in a welcoming and engaging environment where all visitors and participants are invited to examine, challenge, and transform their understanding of the world around them.

The gallery's vision is:

- To foster the awareness, exploration and development of contemporary visual arts through exhibitions, education activities and projects.
- To be an educating facility presenting contemporary art issues and practices in the form of artists talks, panel discussions, workshops and symposiums.
- To facilitate an experience for visitors to have a new or increased understanding of the visual arts that is accessible and inspiring yet also challenging, thought provoking, and energizing.
- To benefit the entire community by contributing to the cultural, social and economic vitality of the Comox Valley through our activities.

## **Organizational Structure**

The CVAG is a non-profit society governed by a 13-member Board of Directors. The staff team is led by an Executive Director who delegates responsibilities among the gallery's various operations and services among herself and three core staff, including a Curator/Program Director, a Co-Curator, and a Hub and Program Facilitator. Based on grants and special projects, the gallery employs additional full-time and part time staff, including various gallery assistants, project leaders, technicians, and retail/visitor engagement staff. Volunteers support various activities in both the gallery and retail space.

## **Relationship with the City**

The CVAG is a public gallery, located in a municipally-owned building and receives partial financial support from the City. The CVAG understands its central role in Courtenay's arts and culture scene but is less than clear on their position within the City's priorities for arts in culture due to a lack of a cultural plan and a lack of clear direction on the City's aims for art and culture. The CVAG's relationship to the City has also experienced changes with regard to the funding framework.

The agreement delegates responsibility for repairs and maintenance for the space they occupy - the space occupied by the art gallery but not the entire building. The building is located on the main and basement floor of 580 Duncan Avenue Courtenay, British Columbia, for community benefit.

## **Goals and Objectives**

The goals and objectives of the CVAG are in accordance with CVAG's mission to:

1. Develop and produce a program of exhibitions, events and related activities that strengthen the gallery's role as a nexus for arts-based inquiry.
2. Increase the gallery's role and presence in community development.
3. Increase community engagement.
4. Support our mandate by ensuring the necessary resources (people, place and funding) are available.
5. Strengthen the gallery's governance.

These specific goals and aspirations are actioned through the following approaches:

- Increasing Social Return on Investment (SROI);
- Conducting more meaningful research;
- Expanding/enhancing its role in creative aspects of the community’s public sphere; and
- Exploring new ways of being a gallery to become a national leader in arts-based organizational innovation.

Over the next 5 – 10 years, the gallery’s activities are intended to:

- Develop a greater connection with the national arts dialogue;
- Build up a more robust research agenda on public art and arts-based inquiry, and;
- Build greater networks.

**Challenges and Constraints**

Current challenges faced by the CVAG include aspects of organizational capacity such as space needs and core staffing. Other challenges include a lack of “base level” technological capacity and time for substantive education and outreach, management and administrative gaps and fundraising. An absence of clear, supportive public policy,

and consistent, multi-year funding at the level required to deliver on these fronts is an additional constraint.

| Key Strengths                         | Needs/Challenges                    |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Research                              | Space                               |
| Grant funding                         | Lack of public policy to align with |
| Interpretive programs                 | Diversified funding                 |
| Knowledge and expertise; well-managed | Staffing (need for more education)  |
| Community and national relevancy      | Recognition                         |

**Programs and Partnerships**

The CVAG delivers nationally-recognized and community-relevant exhibitions and events that provide the region with a dynamic and important visual arts gallery. The gallery’s programs include exhibitions, convergent programs, make art projects, artist talks, creative residencies, Youth Media Project, CVAG Film Series, and more. The CVAG engages in many partnerships to deliver its programming including the

K'ómoks First Nation, North Island College, North Island Hospital, McLoughlin Garden Society, Service Canada, Wachiay Friendship Centre, the Comox Valley School District and many other local businesses and organizations.

## 3.2 Courtenay and District Museum (CDM) and Paleontology Centre

### History of the Organization

The Courtenay and District Museum (CDM) was established in 1961 as a not-for-profit organization, whose mandate was and remains to collect, preserve and interpret the natural and cultural heritage of the Comox Valley region. The collection remains split between natural and cultural themes, with the natural component of the collection rooted in paleontology, and a cultural component comprised of three-dimensional artifacts, historical photographs and archival holdings. The CDM has enjoyed an international reputation for its strong paleontological collection and has seen recent success with a well-received publication focused on its cultural collection.

1999-2000 The museum society purchased, raised funds independently and, with financing \$400,000 with the City of Courtenay and Community Futures Strathcona, renovated

the historic 21,000 sq. ft. 1925 Post Office (expansion in 1958) in 1999-2000. In 2004, the CDM turned ownership over to the City of Courtenay in 2004. In turn, the city and museum negotiate service agreements and confer year round on capital and operating items. The CDM governs independently and owns all collections.

Up to 1987, a diverse group of volunteers managed the governance and everyday operation of CDM. Archaeologist, Katherine Capes, was a founder along with Ben Hughes, Editor of the Comox Argus, First Nations leaders Chief Andy Frank, Robert Clifton and many others. The Board has always included a member of K'ómoks First Nation appointed by Chief and Council.

2008 saw the renovation of the historic Capes family home on seven acres donated by founder, Katherine Capes for a long-term revenue source. In 2009, Heritage BC awarded the museum for efforts on Capes Escape.

### Mandate

#### i. Support natural and cultural heritage awareness in the community:

- Maintain, collect, and preserve the Museum Collection;
- Maintain program subjects which are to include but are not limited to: fossils, geology, First Nations History,

pioneer settlement history and social history of the Comox Valley;

- Partner with other local organizations to support natural and cultural heritage awareness in the community.

ii. **Provide an inclusive and accessible Museum:** Operate a museum which is inclusive and accessible to members of the community despite physical or economic barriers.

iii. **Promote and schedule diverse programs and exhibits:** Establish a permanent collection for display. Schedule changing exhibits which highlight local, regional or provincial collections. Offer on-site and outdoor programming suitable for all age groups.

### **Organizational Structure**

The CDM is governed by a Board of Directors, which moves on decision-making with a collaborative approach. A limited team of museum staff (three full-time) administer the space and programs, along with support of three contractors for project-based work. Each summer, the museum hires students and participates with high school work experience students. Volunteers continue to play a vital role and work in specific curatorial areas on a weekly basis. The museum is open five days a week 10:00-5:00, September-May and

seven days a week May-September 10:00-5:00. School and public programs run from 9:00-5:00.

### **Relationship with the City**

While the CDM does not yet have a strategic plan, it holds an agreement with the City related to long-term financial support, the license to occupy the CDM's venue, and a shared understanding of the CDM's financial and operational models. However, the CDM would benefit from additional planning, operational and capital support from the City, and lacks clarity on the aims of the City in the areas of art and culture more generally.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The CDM plans to build on the success of its cultural history publication by embarking on another publication project, in addition to pursuing the goal of obtaining greater space for the Museum. Leveraging the Museum's paleontology assets and recognition is also being planned as well as building relationships with the K'ómoks First Nation and integrating an Indigenous lens on the collection and in particular, the paleontology work. Ensuring adequate and fair wages to staff is another key area of focus for the organization.

### Programs and Partnerships

The Museum carries out community programs, fossil tours, group programs and fosters accessibility in its programming. Further community partnerships such as with tourism and economic development would benefit the region. Of the 23,500 visitors to the museum in 2015-2016, over 5,300 were students participating in school programs, 1,500 for lectures and 3,200 for special events. Others participated in year-round fossil tours and viewed permanent and changing exhibitions.

Museum staff lead/support regional projects on an ongoing basis. Example: creation of the Comox Valley Heritage Experience, a suite of driving and walking signs and brochures exploring the history of the region. Other examples of community involvement: Centennials of E&N Railway and the City of Courtenay in 2014 and 2015, Courtenay Rotary’s Trails to Rails project and the Royal Canadian Legion Courtenay Branch Wall of Remembrance. The CDM also led the idea for a downtown historic image mural project. The CDM has been involved with the North Island Hospitals Project (NIHP) and just completed a “Living Wall” project with NIHP, Comox Valley Art Gallery, Comox Air Force Museum and the Comox Valley Photographic Society.

For over 30 years, the CDM has been an active member of the BC Museums Association (including on Council), the Canadian Museums Association, Heritage BC and the BC Archival Association.

| Key Strengths                                 | Gaps/Challenges/Needs  |
|---|--|
| Skills base and Board                         | Lack of staff and resources (proper wages)                                 |
| Assets/collection                             | Need for a strategic plan (that addresses digital and succession planning) |
| Accessibility, Family-friendly                | Diversified funding and fundraising  |
| Individual crowdfunding/project-based funding |  |

### 3.3 Sid Williams Civic Theatre (SWTS)

#### History of the Organization

The SWTS has served the Comox Valley for over 25 years as a performing arts facility and has been under the professional administration of the Sid Williams Theatre Society (SWTS) since 2000. The theatre began as a privately-owned movie house in the 1930s and has evolved over the

years to become a 500 seat Civic Theatre for the performing arts in Courtenay while serving the Comox Valley community. The SWTS was formed in May 2000 as a response to the need for professional administration of the Theatre. From the 1970's until 1999, the City held ownership of the theatre and it was operated by the Courtenay Recreation Association during that time. The City no longer has a controlling interest in the theatre's Society and relevant documents have been updated to reflect this.

The SWTS exists as a membership-based Society led by a volunteer Board of Directors who oversee the governance of the Society to the ends of the successful administration of the Theatre and its programming.

### **Mandate**

The Sid Williams Theatre Society is dedicated to the stimulation and enhancement of artistic, cultural, and recreation activities in the Comox Valley and surrounding regions through its operations of the Sid Williams Theatre. Its core values are: inclusion, diversity, accountability, professionalism and community-building. These values are carried out through its mandate:

- To govern and operate the SWTS in an ethical and cost-effective manner for the benefit of our whole community;
- To provide improved opportunities for artistic talent;
- To cultivate interest and participation in, also to foster the appreciation and enjoyment of, the full range of performing arts and culture in the Comox Valley and region;
- By presenting plays, music, dance, film productions and other performances;
- By undertaking public educational projects in furtherance of the aims of the Society;
- By incorporating elements of lighting, sound and other technologies of the theatre industry in performances where appropriate;
- By encouraging local, regional, national and international cooperation in the theatre community.

### **Organizational Structure**

The SWTS is run by the SWTS, which is governed by an eight-member volunteer Board of Directors responsible for the governance, policy development, fundraising, and advocacy of the SWTS and SWTS. Decisions are made within the framework of the organization's strategic plan with programming input from the Board and the hiring of the General Manager. Delegation of the running of the theatre

is made to the General Manager. The theatre benefits from 150 active volunteers, 11 full-time employees and five part-time employees encompassing administration, technical and front of house positions, as well as casual/on-call staff of four.

The public is able to purchase annual memberships which provide audience-oriented benefits and the opportunity to vote at the Annual General Meeting of the Society. Membership at time of writing is 607.

### **Relationship with the City**

The relationship between the SWTS and the City is a supportive one, as the City provides significant annual funding and facility maintenance support. Over the years, the relationship between the Theatre and City has seen changes including a loss of key staff and Board members, reduced management and supervisory structure, planning, and leadership. The Theatre has a license to occupy arrangement with the City that now also includes management and operating services deliverables. There is a lack of clarity on the City's overarching aims in the areas of art and culture and a corresponding lack of clarity on how the SWTS contributes to and aligns with these aims.

At this time the fee for service partnership agreement between the City and the SWTS has the following objectives:

- **Support arts in culture in the community:** Manage a professional theatre to house professional and commercial rental groups, provide subsidized rental rates to qualified non-for-profit community renters.
- **Provide financial and educational support to students** looking to further post-secondary education in the performing arts.
- **Partner with other local organizations** to support arts and culture in the community.
- Provide an **inclusive and accessible** theatre experience:
  - Operate a theatre which is inclusive and accessible to members of the community despite physical or economic barriers
  - Support diverse events and programs: Schedule and promotion of a wide range of theatrical experiences of performers both local and global to attract audiences of all age groups and interests.
- **Fundraise and apply for grants:** Undertake fundraising projects and that the proceeds of such projects will be used solely for the operational and maintenance costs of the Theatre or be used to make capital improvements to

the Theatre or for the purchase of equipment for the Theatre.

- **Manage and schedule the Theatre and Civic Square Plaza Bookings<sup>17</sup>:** Manage and schedule the rental and booking of theatre space and coordinate the receipt of all required risk management and technical requirements for said rentals and bookings.

### **Goals and Objectives**

Current and longer-term goals for the SWTS on behalf of the SWTS include developing long-term capital planning in partnership with the City; improved organization resiliency; expanding youth programming and the implementation of a succession planning model. Other planned activities include an assessment of services to all clients and a review of facility needs. The theatre has benefited from working within a strategic planning framework which concludes this year with a number of key actions having been completed.

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<sup>17</sup> Please note: the management and scheduling of the Civic Square Plaza has been taken over by the Recreation Division.

### **Challenges and Constraints**

Challenges facing the SWTS include:

- **Human Resource Limitations:** need for more specialized support staff, and stronger ability to compete in future for qualified personnel in skilled positions.
- **Facility-related:** accessibility, facility maintenance, technological upgrades and general renovations (small lobby space; small stage, no fly system/no over-stage hydraulics); very limited office space.
- **Competition for both staff and events with larger, better-equipped and funded facility, the Port Theatre, an hour's drive.**
- **From a financial perspective only, heavy community usage/cultural recreation significantly reduces opportunities for commercial/profitable productions, however, the theatre sees community usage as part of its core mandate and values.**
- **The development of an alternate performance space in or near the Sid, that could still benefit from SWT's professional resources (box office, technicians, equipment, marketing) could improve the balance of**

usage for this high-volume venue currently operating at capacity in a growing community.

**Programs and Partnerships**

The SWTS has active outreach programs, offers bursaries, memberships and theatre rentals. It enjoys community support and collaborations. It offers a variety of events throughout the year and its own series (e.g. ongoing events, Blue Circle Series, Sid Docs, Family Film Series, Centre Stage Event, etc.)

| Strengths   | Gaps/Challenges/Needs         |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Community support   | Increased resiliency/capacity |
| Transitioned to growth cycle                                  | Succession planning           |
| Youth programs  | Business partnerships         |
| Adaptability/flexibility (e.g. to community needs and trends) | Facility development          |

### 3.4 Comox Valley Community Arts Council (Comox Valley Arts)

**History of the Organization**

Now operating as Comox Valley Arts, the organization’s history can be traced back to an early organization of artists and arts advocates who united in response to a lack of arts programming in the Comox Valley area in the 1960s, leading to the forerunners of the Upper Island Arts Council (UIAC) in 1965. The Council was later re-named the Comox Valley Community Arts Council to reflect the scope of its membership and services. CVA’s role has consistently been one of organizing and promoting arts and cultural activities for the Valley region and has grown to include a suite of member services including professional development workshops and acting as a point of contact for arts-based tools and supports for Comox Valley Arts groups and individuals of all artistic disciplines.

**Mandate**

Like many arts councils which sprang up in the sixties and early seventies around the province, in the years since inception and transition to the Comox Valley Community

Arts Council (CVA), the Council has initiated, supported or sponsored a growing proliferation of arts events involving local cultural groups. In its current status, Comox Valley Arts continues to fundraise, organize and facilitate arts and cultural activities in the community, as well as provide programs, seminars, professional development workshops, exhibitions, and other forms of support and benefits to its 300 members<sup>18</sup> in the Comox Valley community. Its work centers on building the capacity of arts and culture organizations and individual members in the area.

### **Relationship with the City**

CVA is a not-for-profit organization and receives a small amount of funding from the City through the grants in aid program. The relationship between CVA and the City has changed over the years in positive ways thanks in part to new City management, shifts in planning focus, and a recent turn toward more arts and culture-oriented marketing advocacy. CVA currently acts as an agent on behalf of the City for the City’s annual mural project. CVA is hopeful about being brought into a more engaged, continuous role in support of City goals and priorities, pending the City’s support of CVA’s capacity to deliver. CVA maintains that

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<sup>18</sup> Many of CVA’s members are membership groups themselves, thereby amplifying CVA’s reach.

their own strategic plan contributes to the aims of the City of Courtenay in terms of downtown revitalization and community engagement yet remain unclear on the City’s intended directions in the areas of art and culture more generally.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The goals and objectives of CVA reflect its vision to facilitate and animate arts and culture in the community, and to serve the community by acting as a resource for the arts; informing the public about the arts; and celebrating the Comox Valley as an arts-producing centre. There are growth opportunities for the advancement of cultural service delivery, building recognition, and shifting the language on the arts in the regional discussion. Long-term objectives include a greater investment in facilities, to build revenue and operational capacity, and to develop new operational plans on a year-to-year basis.

### **Organizational Structure**

CVA is governed by a four-member Board Executive lead by a Board President, and 9 Directors-at-Large. The organization is described as “staff-driven”, the two staff at

present being the Executive Director, and Community Engagement Director. The organization is membership-based, with 300 members at the time of writing. CVA operates on a budget comprised of corporate donors and sponsors, grants, public funders including the City of Courtenay, media partners and numerous private donors.

### Partners and Programming

CVA is an active community partner and has generated many public and private supporters and media supporters and works with numerous cultural groups and organizations in the delivery of arts and cultural events, festivals and projects (e.g. over 50). Partners in these pursuits include the City of Courtenay, the Comox Valley Art Gallery, the Sid Williams Theatre, the Comox Valley Justice Institute, the Vancouver Island Regional Library, North Island College, the Comox Valley School District, KFN, CVEDS, Village of Cumberland, CVRD, and numerous local businesses. Key programming includes: 30-Day Drawing Challenge, Central Island Arts Guide & Studio Tour, Downtown Courtenay Summer Street Markets, and Youth Music Showcases. Membership services and resources (postings, networking, support, directory, advertising) are also offered; along with professional development for creative professionals; delivering the Comox Valley Poet Laureate Program; and Exhibitions.

### Challenges and Constraints

In terms of organizational capacity, CVA has identified a need for more full-time staff, administrative support and part-time staff. While CVA’s budget includes 40% in earned revenues—a 300% increase in 2 years and notable success, the lack of core funding impacts staffing which in turns impacts the organization’s capacity and results in compromised programming and/or decreased ability to deliver programs which support cultural development. CVA also identified recently they require more office and programming space.



| Key Strengths   | Gaps/Needs/Challenges   |
|---|---|
| Fills the gap of cultural planner <sup>19</sup> at City level                       | Multi-year funding from local and regional levels for staffing                  |
| Knowledge and relationships with community stakeholders/Strong community engagement | Improved relationship with City (City understanding and acknowledging CVA role) |
| Tech savvy and well-organized/managed   | Lack of physical space  |
| Solid Board of Directors and accountability   | Burn out  |
| Quality programming (especially capacity building)                                  |   |
| Good relationship with funders  |   |



<sup>19</sup> CVA has the opportunity to fill the existing gap of cultural planner and provide community cultural planning. However no official mandate, funding or agreement in place.

## 4. Cross-Jurisdictional Analysis

### (Case Studies)

In view of their recognition of arts and culture in contributing to a higher quality of life, thriving creative economies, and growing cultural tourist destinations, the **City of Revelstoke, B.C.**, the **City of Maple Ridge B.C.**, and the **Town of Aurora, ON's** cultural strategies were considered in terms of relevant practices, target groups, and collaborations/partnerships. The **City of Salmon Arm, Sechelt**, and **Nelson** were also evaluated for their successful approaches to arts and cultural vibrancy.

Like the **City of Courtenay**, each of these municipalities offer several museums, art galleries, and theatres, as well as cultural activities and events occurring throughout the year. A full profile, strategic summary, and analysis is available in Appendix B.



## Case Study 1: The City of Revelstoke, BC

The strategy from Revelstoke is relevant to Courtenay because of the City's focus in ensuring there is a diversity of recreational and cultural programming for all ages, including youth and seniors. Furthermore, it highlights the need for Courtenay to:

- Work with community agencies in the delivery of the program, which could include in-kind support, space, equipment, etc. For example, to increase the number of youth programming, the City could work with community agencies and the School District.
- Coordinate and collaborate among the various non-profit and government organizations to ensure effective use of limited resource, improve information sharing and the provision of coordinated programs and services. Not only would this would improve access to expertise within the City, but access to grants as well. Revelstoke is supported by an effective arts council which delivers programming but also capacity-building on behalf of the City.

## Case Study 2: The City of Maple Ridge, BC

The strategy from Maple Ridge is relevant to Courtenay because of the comparable understanding of the role cities play in advancing cultural life for its residents. With a vision of growing community through culture, Maple Ridge's Culture Plan emphasizes the need to ensure everyone feels they can participate in the cultural life of the city.

To strengthen diversity and inclusion, the Culture Plan emphasizes the need to:

- Continue engagement and dialogue with the multicultural community; youth, seniors, new residents, immigrants, people with disabilities and the LGBTQ2S+ and gender diverse community.
- The cultural plan is rooted in place and titled 'Walking Together' to underscore the importance of working in partnership with local Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations.
- Use culture as a tool to enhance dialogue and opportunities for marginalized communities through inclusivity initiatives, such as ticketed access, free events, and programs with identified partners.
- Work with relevant community organizations, to consider the creation of a community Arts Cultural Accessibility Fund which would help minimize barriers

for these communities to partake in the cultural life of the city.

- To ensure there is continual dialogue, the City acknowledges it can play a role in convening a Cultural Leadership Roundtable meeting that provides an opportunity for collaboration, information-sharing, and event coordination. Membership at the Cultural Roundtable would include representation from arts and culture organizations, Indigenous communities, and the City's tourism and economic development division. To support the City's planning process, the Cultural Roundtable would be a strong resource to assist with the planning and implementation of programs and initiatives.
- Integrate culture strategically within City Hall particularly in economic development and tourism planning. While the Cultural Manager role is still housed with Parks, Recreation and Culture, a lot of interdepartmental team work has been advanced over the past two years to ensure a cultural lens is adding value to City planning. This is an important marker in cultural development—to see the shift from a programmatic lens to strategic— in achieving the City's broader goals.

### Case Study 3: The Town of Aurora, Ont.

The strategy from the Town of Aurora is relevant to Courtenay because a thriving cultural community depends on public, private, and community partnerships. To build and sustain these partnerships, the Culture Master Plan recommends:

- The recruitment of champions from the community to act as advocates to support the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan and ongoing cultural development.
- Furthermore, it also recommends the creation of a Community Leadership Group that support the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan, but also seeks to find solutions to problems.
- The creation of an Annual Cultural Summit is also recommended, which provides an opportunity for business and community leaders to explore opportunities and challenges of a thriving cultural community. Members of the community-at-large and cultural stakeholders are then well-positioned to review the progress of the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan and identify new opportunities and initiatives. Furthermore, the Summit can be a platform for striking task-based working groups to advance cultural issues and initiatives.

## Case Study 4: The City of Nelson, BC

Relevant to Courtenay is the administrative approach and responsibility the City of Nelson has taken to its arts and cultural programs. As a municipality, the City of Nelson works to engage multiple stakeholders, with the support of a planning committee such as the CDC (Cultural Development Committee) that meets monthly to offer high-level strategic approaches to further heritage, creativity, diversity, and excellence in Nelson's lifestyle.

- The committee has developed a comprehensive Cultural Policy which includes various publicly available<sup>20</sup> policy, bylaw, and reference documents to guide and shape the cultural sector. These documents are intended to guide the working groups, that coordinate the City's festival, heritage, and public art programs.
- The Cultural Development Committee is supported by a knowledgeable cultural sector City Staff employee.
- The strategic plan is timeline and goal-oriented and developed with political sensitivity, to the 4-year term the mayor and council has in office.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://nelson.civicweb.net/filepro/documents/488?preview=21305>

- The Recreation Master Plan recommends that the Nelson and District Recreation Commission preserve, maintain, and manage important indoor and outdoor spaces in a manner that supports community participation (p.16). Vital recreation, cultural programming, and studio space are offered through the city-owned youth center and also the civic center. Within the Recreation Master Plan Nelson's special events (64%) are cited as a leading facility use (p.104).

## Case Study 5: The City of Sechelt, BC

The strategy from Sechelt is relevant to Courtenay because of the following approaches the City took to recognize the community's grass roots creativity and pro-arts advocacy:

- The City hired a coordinator to specifically support municipal and regional arts planning.
- Courtenay also has inter-regional considerations; it's at the core of the Comox Valley Regional District which includes communities such as Comox, Cumberland, Hornby, and Denman Island.

To address this the Sunshine Coast Regional Cultural Strategy was published in April 2007 following the Sunshine Coast Regional District Regional Cultural Scan released June 30, 2006.

### Case Study 6: The City of Salmon Arm, BC

The strategy from Salmon Arm is relevant to Courtenay because of their comparable regional geography, and their third-party delivery of arts and cultural services through a fee-for-service agreement (FFSA). The City provides annual support funding through a fee-for-service arrangement with the following three organizations. The following reflects the 2019 budget:

- The Salmon Arm Museum and Archives - \$80,000
- The Trial Alliance - \$50,000
- The Roots and Blues Festival - \$90,000
- The Salmon Arm Arts Centre - \$41,000 (+\$6,000 increase for 2019)

The contract is for a 3-year term and outlines the following terms for service delivery:

- General advice on Arts and Culture issues as requested by Council;
- Exhibitions, opening receptions and artist talks;
- Wednesday On the Wharf: summer concert series;
- Arts programming for young families, children and youth;
- Arts outreach programs for the public;
- Education programs for local schools and groups;
- Arts referral and support services;
- Meeting and working studio spaces for individuals and cultural groups.

# 5. Cultural Partners: Management and Performance Review



## 5.1 General Funding Comparisons

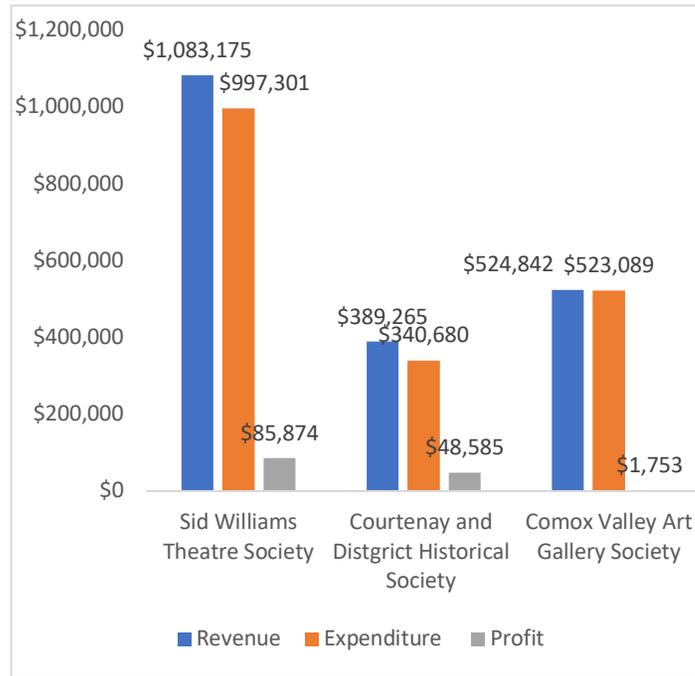
This section details the financial realities for the operating societies of the Sid Williams Theatre, the Courtenay and District Museum (Courtenay and District Historical Society) and the Comox Valley Art Gallery Society.

The three organizations generate a combined revenue of nearly \$2,000,000. All three organizations generated an excess revenue totaling \$333,508, creating significant local economic impact. As seen below, the largest organization is the Sid Williams Theatre Society, generating a revenue larger than the other two organizations combined.

The table below illustrates key financial details of the cultural organizations across comparable categories. Note, given the different operating realities and accounting practices of each organization, direct comparison is often not possible. As such, this table only includes categories where it is possible to accurately compare the financial figures. Further details of each organization can be found in Sections 6.1- 6.3.



**Figure 1: 2017 Financial Reporting**



**Table 1: 2017 Operational Financial Reporting Tables**

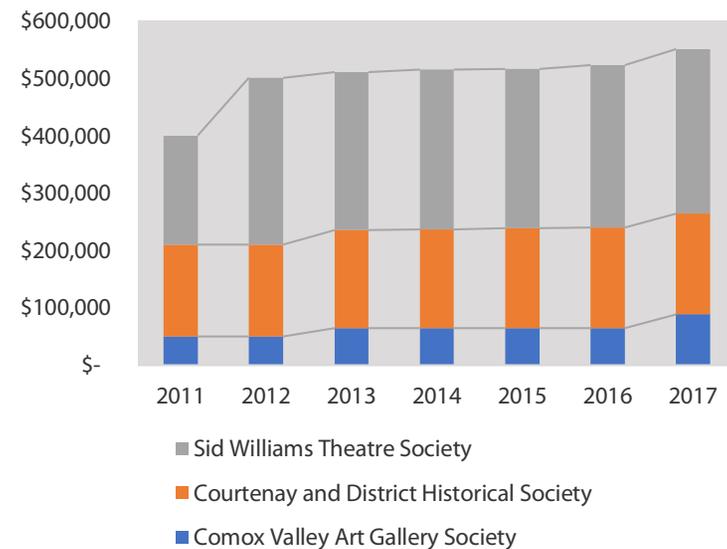
|                            | Sid Williams Theatre Society       | Courtenay and District Historical Society | Comox Valley Art Gallery Society |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Revenues</b>            | <b>\$1,083,175</b>                 | <b>\$389,265</b>                          | <b>\$524,842</b>                 |
| <b>Contributed Revenue</b> | <b>\$384,810 (36%)</b>             | <b>\$260,664 (67%)</b>                    | <b>\$422,521 (80%)</b>           |
| City of Courtenay          | \$286,600 (core funding \$231,600) | \$175,000 (core funding)                  | \$75,000 (core funding \$65,000) |
| <b>Earned Revenue</b>      | <b>\$698,365 (64%)</b>             | <b>\$128,601 (33%)</b>                    | <b>\$102,321 (20%)</b>           |
| Donations                  | \$38,612                           | \$30,110                                  | \$28,794                         |
| Facility Rentals           | \$174,014                          | \$20,356                                  | \$28,229                         |
| Other                      | \$480,608                          | \$78,357                                  | \$45,298                         |
| <b>Expenditures</b>        | <b>\$997,301</b>                   | <b>\$340,680</b>                          | <b>\$523,089</b>                 |
| Wages, Salaries Benefits   | \$667,779 (67%)                    | \$153,880 (45%)                           | \$185,642 (34%)                  |
| Advertising                | \$43,563 (4%)                      | \$8,669 (3%)                              | \$8,501 (2%)                     |
| Other                      | \$285,9595 (29%)                   | \$178,131 (52%)                           | \$328,946 (63%)                  |

### City Contributions

As shown in Figure 2 below, the City’s contributions to cultural facilities has grown by 37% since 2011. The biggest contributing factor was the \$100,000 increase in support of the Sid Williams Theatre Society in 2012 to achieve parity with funding of other Vancouver Island and BC theatre facilities operating similarly to the Sid, and to address chronic under funding (due in part to one municipality, Courtenay, shouldering the load of a larger region/population served).

However, both the Courtenay and District Historical Society and the Comox Valley Art Gallery Society have seen increased support from the City as well. The Comox Valley Art Gallery receives \$65,000 from the City for core funding. In 2017 the Gallery also received an additional \$10,000 for a one-time grant in aid.

**Figure 2: Annual City Contributions to Cultural Organizations**



### Other Sources of Funding

All three organizations receive funding from a variety of other sources, as indicated in the following table.

**Table 2: 2017 funding amounts from different sources<sup>23</sup>**

| Organization                               | Comox Valley Regional District | Town of Comox | BC Arts Council | Provincial Gaming | Canada Council for the Arts | Federal Government      |
|--|--------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Comox Valley Art Gallery Society           | \$8,385                        | \$5,000       | \$58,241        | \$41,000          | \$142,500                   | \$133,405 <sup>24</sup> |
| Courtenay and District Historical Society  | \$12,250                       |               | \$25,000        | \$40,000          |                             | \$8,164                 |
| Sid Williams Theatre Society <sup>25</sup> | \$25,000                       | \$12,000      | 9,000           | \$7,909           | X                           | 25,000                  |

In addition to the support from the key funding groups listed in the table above, each organization receives support from other groups. For example, the Sid Williams Theatre Society receives support from:

- The BC Touring Council (BCTC)
- TD Bank Financial Group

<sup>23</sup> These are specific to 2017 grant amounts and include one-time grants for specific projects.

<sup>24</sup> The Comox Valley Art Gallery Society receives funding at the federal level from Service Canada, Industry Canada and Canada Museums.

- Corporate Partners and Event Sponsors that include:
  - Courtney & Anglin Real Estate Group
  - Old House Hotel and Spa
  - WhatsOn Digest
  - The Eagle 97.3 FM
  - Remax Ocean pacific Realty
  - F12

The Comox Valley Art Gallery receives further support from:

- The Canadian Museums Association
- Community Support and Partnerships that include:
  - ABC Printing and Signs
  - Kumugwe Cultural Society
  - Community Justice Centre
  - Comox Valley School District

<sup>25</sup> The Sid Williams Theatre Society does not report specific numbers for each funding source. However, according to its website, it receives support from each of the groups listed in Table 2.

While the above organizations receive support from a diverse range of partners, the Courtenay and District Historical Society receives funding only from the four organizations noted in the table above. This reveals an opportunity for the City to work with the Society, which currently receives the largest portion of revenue from the City (44%), to diversify revenue streams and seek new partners.

### **Potential New Sources of Funding**

The cultural funding landscape is constantly evolving, offering new opportunities for organizations to find support. A recent example (2018) is the \$88 million that has become available through the Canada Council for the Arts' [Digital Strategy Fund](#). The fund encourages an overall approach that helps support organizations in understanding the digital world, engaging with it, and responding to the cultural and social changes it produces.

The priorities of the fund are described as follows:

- A focus on collaboration, partnership and networking;
- Open-mindedness, and willingness to share knowledge, results, ideas and lessons learned; and,
- Experimentation, risk-taking and iterative development.

The Government of Canada's [Canada Cultural Spaces Fund](#) is another important funding option for cultural facilities around the country. The government has committed \$54 million over the next ten years to support cultural infrastructure. The fund is open to any arts and cultural organization or cultural facility manager and lists the following as eligible projects:

- Construction or renovation of arts or heritage facilities or creative hubs;
- Acquisition of specialized equipment; and
- Development of feasibility studies for the construction or renovation of arts or heritage facilities or creative hubs.

Locally, the [Comox Valley Community Foundation](#) provides \$250,000 in support to the community each year and could be a valuable local funder.

There are numerous sources for funding that may be applicable to one or more of the cultural organizations in Courtenay – far more than can be included within this report. However, there are several online repositories of funding options that can be leveraged to seek new funding opportunities. For example:

- Provincial organizations such as [Arts BC](#) help cultural organizations locate and successfully apply for grant

opportunities, and offer capacity-building tools and resources.

- While the Victoria Foundation only provides direct funding to groups located in the CRD, its [website](#) has an extensive list of roughly 100 national foundations/organizations (e.g., The McLean Foundation, Walmart Canada) that are potential funding options.

All organizations could also continue to seek community and business support in Courtenay though the challenge of a small region/limited business pool for support is recognized. In particular, searching for new sources of funding from organizations that may align with the mandate and mission of each organization will increase the likelihood of successfully sourcing support.

## 5.2 Sid Williams Civic Theatre

### Operations

Using a Non-Profit Lifecycles lens and based on the assessment interviews and data provided, the SWTS has navigated through a period of decline and is in active turnaround and renewal. Through the leadership of its General Manager and Board, it has taken decisive action to

regain relevance and viability. It is now working in response to community needs, as best as it can at current staffing levels.

It is well-managed and its operations are in keeping with current theatre management practice and industry trends. It does, however, require a fuller complement of trained, skilled workers, and board representation. It has managed to continue to deliver its core services despite the stress of its past financial position and has addressed this through a trimmed-down staffing structure, and other expense-cutting measures.

In terms of systems and resources, SWTS is actively addressing how its systems need to be improved (e.g. moving towards a new CRM/ticketing system) to meet its marketing, programming and (eventually) expanded fundraising work. The SWTS would benefit from continuing financial planning and management support at the Board and City levels, especially considering its planned capital projects (see their Strategic Plan).

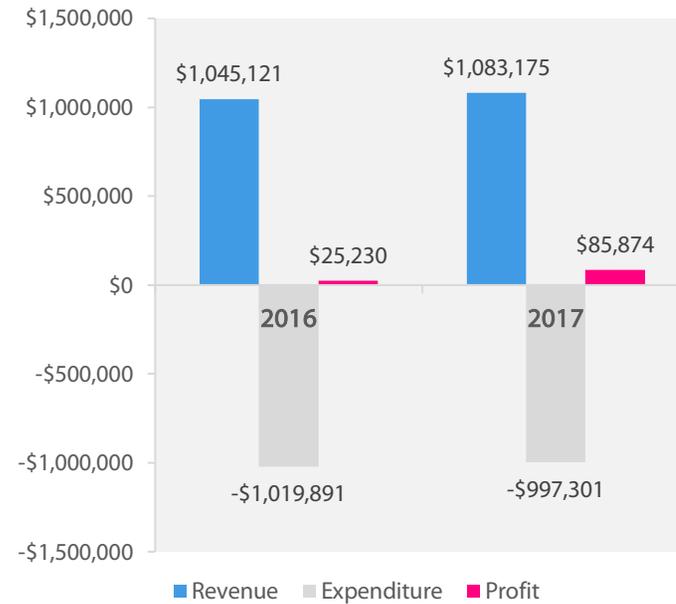
### Financial Management

In 2017, the Sid Williams Theatre Society (SWTS) reported revenues of \$1,083,175. The Society generated an excess

revenue of \$85,874, which was more than a 200% increase from 2016.

Of that revenue, 64% is earned, with the remaining \$384,810 split between management fees (\$181,600) and a variety of provincial and other government grants, totaling more than \$200,000.<sup>26</sup> Support from the City of Courtenay equals \$286,600 (26% of revenues). These include management fees as well as a \$55,000 grant used to make improvements to the theatre.

**Figure 4: Sid Williams Theatre (2016 – 2017)**



The majority of the SWTS’ earned revenues are generated through events and ticket sales (\$255,966). In terms of facility rentals, the SWTS earned \$174,014 in 2017 (16% of revenues). Furthermore, 2017 was the third straight year that the theatre saw growth in revenues generated from facility rentals. Additionally, it raised \$38,612 in donations,

<sup>26</sup> The SWTS received \$146,250 in Community Cultural Grants in 2017.

or 3.5% of revenues – notably less than the other two organizations.

Currently, the SWTS only receives \$25,000 from the CVRD. However, during interviews it was noted that support from the City to help lobby for further regional contributions or partnerships would be a key means for supporting the growth of the Sid Williams Theatre Society.

On the expenditure side, a total of \$997,301 was reported in 2017. As with all three of the organizations, labour related costs were the largest expenditure, totaling \$667,779. With a total of 16 staff in 2017, this is an average labour cost of \$41,736, notably higher than the other two cultural organizations in the city.<sup>27</sup> Despite the high labour expenditure, it was noted in the interview that the SWTS has struggled to find the talent required to manage and operate the theatre.

The total advertising expenditure was \$43,563, just over 4% of total expenditure. Roughly 60% of their marketing spend goes to marketing and promoting events, with the remaining 40% used for fundraising purposes.

It was also noted that maintaining the aging building is resource and cost intensive, making the Government of

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<sup>27</sup> Note, the cultural organizations report a total number of staff and do not indicate whether these are full time equivalents (FTEs) or part time staff. As

Canada’s Cultural Spaces Fund, discussed above, an important option for the SWTS. Furthermore, the SWTS expressed a desire for financial support to improve their monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment ability. Such analysis would help the theatre understand and quantify the value and impact they generate, allowing them to ‘make the case’ to funders and other potential or existing partners.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The SWTS ticketing system, annual reports and strategic planning, operating agreement with the City of Courtenay, annual BCAC funding applications and budgeting are the various monitoring and evaluation tools the theatre uses to assess its performance in a transparent and accountable way.

## **5.3 Comox Valley Art Gallery Society**

### **Operations**

The CVAG has seen an impressive growth in programming, however, its capacity has not caught up to its success. In particular, its funding from City and Regional sources does not reflect its new relevancy. The organization experienced significant decline and has navigated its turnaround since

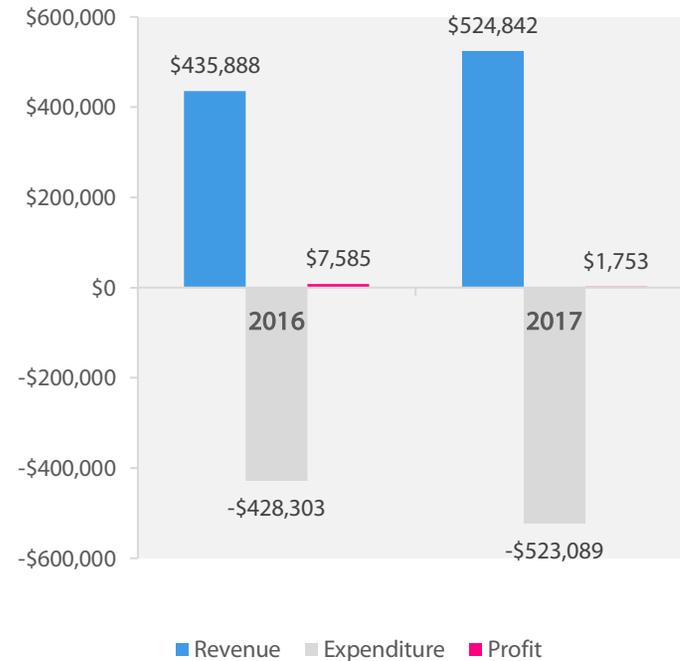
such, the average labour spend may not be directly comparable in terms of \$/FTEs.

2012. It is well-managed and is regarded as so from other levels of government. Like the Museum and Theatre, the Gallery offers a third civic space for community dialogue, experience and accessible cultural participation.

Further performance improvement could involve reaching an operating agreement with the City that includes multi-year funding to offer operational consistency rather than through the uncertainty of Gaming funds. Furthermore, they are looking to build on the recent success of their workshops by gaining support for an education and outreach coordinator. Such support would help build an important earned revenue stream for the Society while also providing community benefits through the provision of learning opportunities. Also noted in interviews was the lack of stability and long-term planning ability, due to the void of multi-year funding contributions.

## Financial Management

Figure 5: Comox Valley Art Gallery (2016 – 2017)



As shown in Figure 5, the Art Gallery generated \$524,842 in revenue in 2017, a 25% increase from 2016. This growth was due in large part to an increase in federal funding by \$70,000 dollars and the success of rentals and workshops, generating \$28,229, up from just \$2,000 in 2016.

Of their revenue, 80% is contributed revenue, largely through the federal grant discussed above. The art gallery also received \$75,000 from the City of Courtenay (14% of revenue). This consisted of a \$65,000 operating grant and a one-time \$10,000 grant in aid. It also received \$13,375 from the Town of Comox and the Regional District of Comox and Strathcona.

In terms of earned revenue, the largest factor of their growth was due to rentals and workshop programming, discussed above. The Society was also able to raise \$28,974 in fundraising and private sector support in 2017.

In 2017, The Comox Valley Art Gallery Society reported \$523,089 in expenditures, with the largest contributor (\$185,642) being labour costs. The Art Gallery noted eight staff on their website, resulting in an average labour cost of \$23,205. It also reported a \$4,000 loss on the operations of their gift shop, due in large part to renovations that caused closures throughout the year.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Gallery measures its performance annually through its strategic plan review, financial reports and programming updates provided at the annual general meetings and to various levels of government.

## **5.4 Courtenay and District Historical Society**

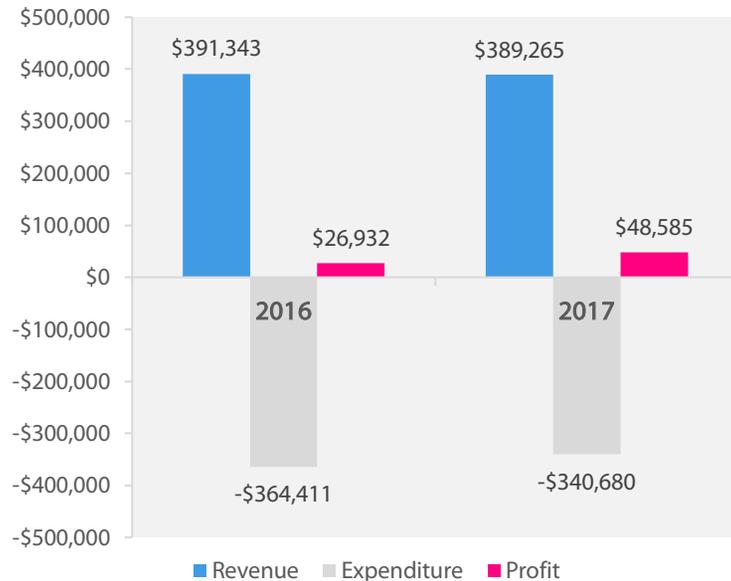
### **Operations**

At present, the organization is in the mature stage of its lifecycle but is moving toward a phase of renewed growth and adaptation.



## Financial Management

Figure 6: Courtenay and District Historical Society (2016 – 2017)



The Courtenay and District Historical Society reported revenues of \$389,265 in 2017, the smallest of the three organizations included in the scope of this work. 67% of revenues are contributed, with the largest funding source being the City of Courtenay (\$175,000 or 44% of total revenue). As with the Comox Valley Art Gallery Society, the Historical Society also receives a \$40,000 BC gaming grant.

The largest earned revenue source came from tours and lectures, which generated nearly \$40,000 or 10% of revenues in 2017. Additionally, the Society earned 9% of its revenues from the gift shop and 5% from rental income.

The Society was also able to generate \$30,110 in donations in 2017. As 8% of revenues, this is the largest ratio of any of the organizations.

Interestingly, it was noted in the interviews that the Society operates without a dedicated fundraising committee, but has remained focused on generating revenues through specific grants and project-based crowdfunding initiatives. Other budget planning has focused on strengthening public services and generating revenue to support the growth and sustainability of the museum. The need for funding to develop a strategic plan was also noted in interviews.

The Society’s 2017 expenditures totaled \$340,680 in 2017. Nearly-half of all expenditures (\$153,888) went to salaries and wages. With a staff of six, this equals \$25,648 in average labour costs. The gift shop costed the Society \$22,967, revealing a profit of nearly \$13,000. An additional expense

is repairs and maintenance which totaled \$22,103 in 2017 due in large part to a one-time roofing project.<sup>28</sup>

Another notable expense is the more than \$15,000 spent in 2017 (greater than \$20,000 in 2016) on interest and loan charges. A note in the financials is provided below, however, interest and bank charges are high.

“In 2017, the Courtenay and District Museum’s total amount for bank charges was \$4,734. Normally this amount runs at around \$4,000. Approximately \$2,000 or half of this amount is merchant fees related to gift shop and program income at just over \$100,000. The other half comprises bank charges for four accounts and for four hundred and fifty dollars paid for monthly fees and an annual review related to the line of credit. Due to some one-time shifts: retirement and a major change in bookkeeping personnel in 2017, initiation of direct deposit for employees, cheque orders, and Capes Escape mortgage renewal, the average amount of \$4,000 for overall bank charges the museum normally experiences increased by \$734 in 2017.”

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<sup>28</sup> For the roofing project, the society was able to raised \$4,000 through a crowdfunding campaign.

## 5.5 Comox Valley Community Arts Council (CVA)

### Operations

At present, CVA identifies as being in between growth and maturation phases of its lifecycle. It has a clear sense of direction in its management and operations and a limited team who are ensuring member and community value. It is hindered by its space and battles against a lack of capacity to deliver its in-demand services.

### Financial Management

A financial analysis was not included as part of the scope of this assessment as CVA is not a current cultural partner of the City. That said, CVA is punching above its weight on an operating budget of \$140,000 and derives benefits from many community partnerships.



## 6. Considerations and Recommendations



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<sup>29</sup> CVAG: Artist John Powell at opening (Nump Ma Noch Gyai Yoo Lahss - We All Come From One Root) | Welcome Pole Ceremony - Fall, 2018 (in partnership with K'omoks First Nation and City of Courtenay)

### **Capacity: Ensuring Sustainable Levels of Core Services**

Courtenay benefits from the four key arts and cultural assets reviewed above which are not only well-managed but are keeping up with current trends and practices in their respective fields, and demonstrating lead roles. While enjoying programmatic success, community relevancy, and improved resiliency of having moved their organizations through decline/turnaround, all four suffer from a lack of capacity to sustainably deliver their services at current funding levels in alignment with their respective City agreements.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- That the City of Courtenay work towards supporting the **Sid Williams Civic Theatre** in the diversifying of its revenue base over three years by working with the Comox Valley Regional District in determining a funding formula to reflect the regional role of the theatre. The same could be considered for the other cultural partners though to a lesser extent given the wider engagement with performing arts.
- That the City of Courtenay create a new Fee for Service Agreement (FFSA) with the **Comox Valley Community Arts Council**, and in recognizing the regional service of

this key cultural asset, encourage increased financial contribution from the Comox Valley Regional District. The FFSA could see the third-partying of marketing for arts and culture in the region, acting as a convenor and facilitator to community groups and providing coordination with or/on behalf of the City (and/or potentially the District). This can be achieved through building capacity in the community and region through its current professional development, training, resource and tool sharing programs, and other agreed-upon objectives and services. The FFSA would provide additional funding to assist in boosting CVA capacity by an additional 20 hours per week for the coordinator role on behalf of the City. The FFSA would offer stable multi-year funding and a move away from the uncertainty gaming funds. They also require the provision of further office and programming space. Funding sources could be leveraged through the hotel room tax.

- The City should consider an increase in multi-year core funding in order for **CVAG** to meet the objective of providing public education and outreach to the community which is falling short of its potential at this time.

- That the City of Courtenay help support the **Museum** in the diversifying of its revenue base (currently 44% City-contributed) by encouraging the development of a fundraising plan for the Courtenay and District Historical Society, and explore opportunities to work with the Courtenay and District Historical Society to minimize costs for financial services.

**Marketing Investment: Enhancing participation**

Three of the cultural organizations in Courtenay are spending less than 5% of their expenditures on advertising or promotion, with the Comox Valley Art Gallery Society and the Courtenay and District Historical Society each spending only ~\$8,500 annually.

According to the data-informed suggested formula of Marketing or ‘Audience Acquisition Cost’ (A) = Earned Revenue (12.5%),<sup>30</sup> both the Sid Williams Theatre Society and the Courtenay District Historical Society should be spending roughly-double their current spend while the Comox Valley Art Gallery Society should increase spending by 50%. Despite often being seen as an ‘expense’ that is not

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.colleendilen.com/2016/01/06/how-much-money-should-your-cultural-nonprofit-invest-in-getting-people-in-the-door-data/>

central to operations, evidence suggests that spending on marketing should be seen instead as a wise investment providing a high-return.<sup>31</sup>

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- With the above in mind, the City may wish to consider an increase specifically to the cultural partner’s marketing expenditures, and explore the possibility of centralized marketing and administration to promote efficiencies. This would provide the opportunity for a two-fold return as it may increase the earned revenue of the organizations (potentially reducing reliance on City grants), while also increasing awareness and use of these spaces by local residents.

Potential models could include matching support for organization’s who choose to increase investment in marketing and promotion, or grants tied specifically to advertising related initiatives. This should be further explored in collaboration with regional partners in economic and tourism development.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.colleendilen.com/2016/06/29/on-museum-layoffs-the-data-informed-importance-of-marketing-and-engagement-departments>

## Maintaining Cultural Capital Assets

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- That the City of Courtenay work to support the Sid Williams Theatre in making an application to the Cultural Spaces Fund in order to help minimize rising costs for maintaining the aging building; and for upgrades and ticket surcharge use for maintenance.
- That the City of Courtenay work with all cultural partners in developing use of facilities plans, including the identification of use alternative and non-traditional spaces (e.g. gift shop pop ups).
- That the City of Courtenay further encourage cultural amenity contributions as part of the Developer Application Approval Process to help fund and maintain cultural infrastructure.

### Business Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Incentivize or support **all organizations** to improve their monitoring and evaluation, especially as it relates to 'making the case' for financial support (e.g., (S)ROI, impact evaluation).

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Partner and work towards the development of a Cultural Scorecard to which cultural partners can reflect their work and measure performance outcomes.
- That the City provide partial funding every three to five years in its Operating Agreements to cover the expense of strategic planning for its Cultural Partners; and help build capacity and training in SROI and impact evaluation.
- That each organization provide a comparable baseline of wages for comparison purposes.

### Future Directions and Models: Community Contribution Company and/or Regional Culture Commission

In an effort to reflect the regional nature of the arts and culture assets of the Theatre, Museum, Gallery and Arts Council, and in turn better serve the region as a whole, it's encouraged:

- That the City work with the Regional District, Town of Comox and Village of Cumberland in exploring the

development of an Inter -Municipal Working Group that would pay for a part-time community cultural liaison. This person would work with the respective governments and the arts and culture community of the region in its cultural development, including the exploration of a regional grants program for arts organizations, and the regular convening and facilitation of a future community-led Cultural Roundtable to minimize duplication, overlap between organizations and events, and improve calendarization and marketing, as well as collaboration and partnership opportunities.

- The City may also wish to explore a further consideration of centralizing the earned-revenue capacity of its cultural partners by examining the case for developing a community contribution company (C3) through which the four organizations could benefit from its profits. The City could, in keeping with its strengths, provide a space and business plan support for the development of the C3. C3s, a newer form of incorporation in the province, has both economic and social returns as guideposts and measures to company performance, and often align well with local government social innovation and procurement policies.

- The City may also wish to explore approaching the CVRD for a balanced funding formula which may arise through consultations within a cultural planning process.

### **Role of the City in Arts and Cultural Development**

While the City has laid many foundation pieces to its cultural development, it now has an enhanced role to play thanks to the maturation and renewal of its cultural assets and a shifting community dynamic that sees an increasing expectation of cultural amenities.

What has remained unclear is the optimal role in the absence of a cultural plan to which arts and culture organizations (partners and non-partners), artists and volunteers, can align with and understand the City's overarching aims with respect to arts and cultural development; directions and measurable outcomes and performance. While the move towards business-planning through Operating Agreements has provided some assistance to cultural partners, the City may benefit following a cultural planning process, from the creation of a position of a community cultural manager (or through the above recommendation at a regional level) at a future date. The role would include a background and expertise in arts and cultural policy, planning and development (see Sechelt example) given the predominates of artists and arts and culture activity in the region and the many assets within the

City of Courtenay. A further consideration may be to encourage an integrated role of culture within City Hall and in overall community planning. Many local governments are migrating arts, culture and events services to other departments such as economic and tourism development and communications.

In order to determine its optimal role in arts and culture service delivery and development, a concluding

recommendation is for the City to carry out a cultural planning process which would include extensive engagement with the community, stakeholders and other governments in order to further understand demand and articulate its aims and directions over the next ten years. In the interim, the following table can serve as a guideline for the many roles the City currently has in arts and culture development and delivery.



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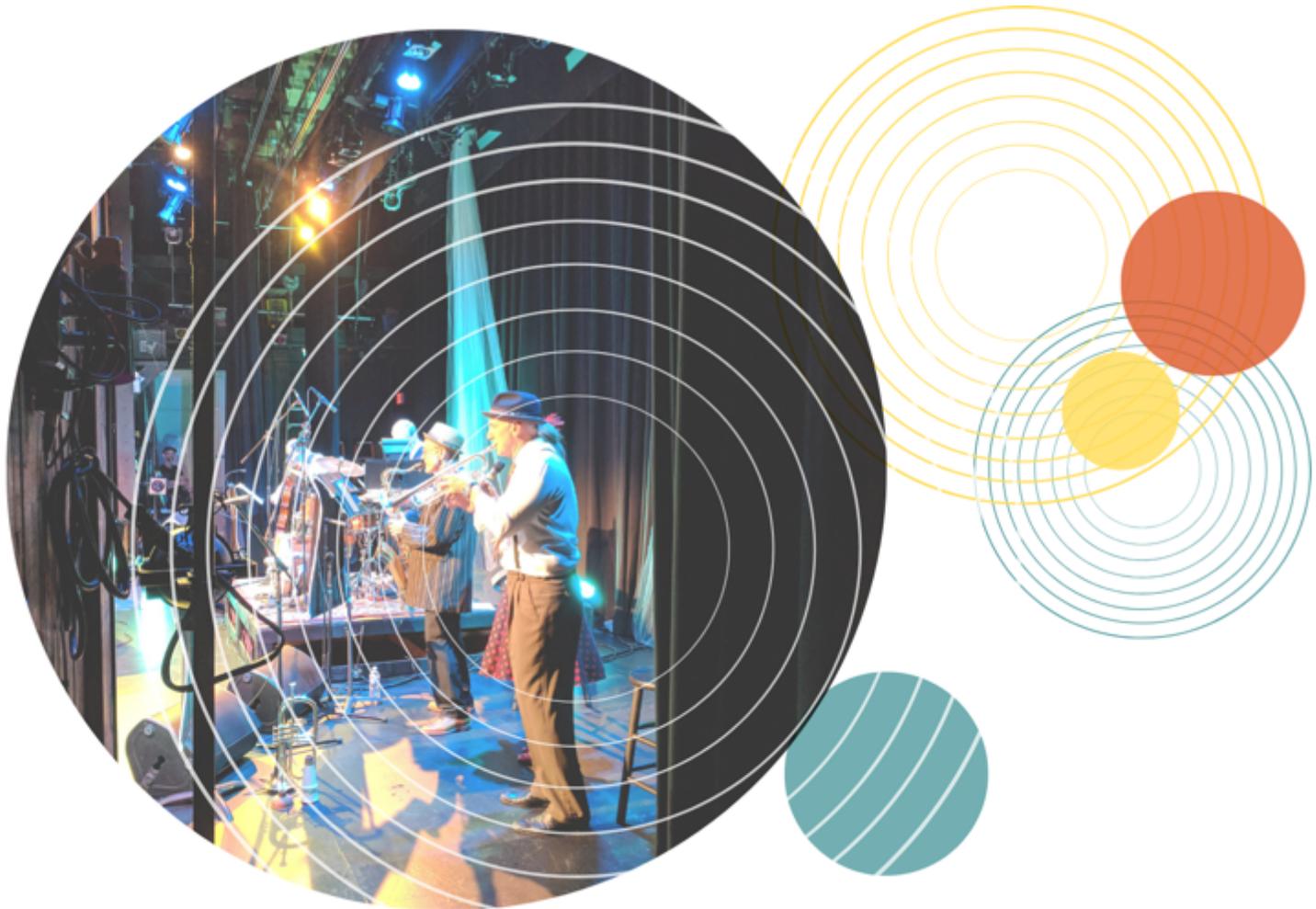
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<sup>32</sup> CVAG staff and volunteers

## City Roles in Cultural 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 Plan                                  | Improved performance, efficiencies and capacity  |
| Convenor and Facilitator | No  | Unclear  | More of a role to play   | 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.   |
| Funder                   | Yes, through grants and agreements        | Continue and optimize  | Yes  | Optimized cultural resource 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  |

## 7. Moving Forward



### **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. The same also applies to the other cultural partners though to a lesser extent due to the wider engagement with performing arts.
- Work with the Museum in diversifying its revenue base and identifying cost reductions.
- Begin scoping of cultural planning process by convening an Intermunicipal Cultural Working Group.

### **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.

### **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.

## APPENDIX A

### Guiding Questions for Discussion

The following questions will act as a general guide for conversations with representatives from the City of Courtenay's client organizations. The questions are adjusted as required to suit the client identified below, based on the consultant's determination and will serve as 'prompts' for the initial intake. Interviews are encouraged to take place in-person where possible and can take the form of a group interview if preferred by the client organization.

As introduced to the interviewee, the objectives of the initial interview are primarily to:

1. Gather key information on the client organization in order to determine the appropriate needs and required services, and current working environment;
2. Connect with the client to establish a baseline of information for the City to help guide arts and culture development; and
3. May serve to help inform a future cultural planning process.

### For client interviewees: Internal & Operating Environment

*Prepared and adapted by Patricia Huntsman for the City of Courtenay. No distribution without written permission.*

1. Where is your organization currently in its life cycle? (see attached Non-Profit Lifecycles\*model table Key indicators: working vs governance board; established operations; main staff positions filled, etc... Start-Up; Growth; Established; Maturity; Turnaround; Decline/Extinction)
2. What are the KEY STRENGTHS and assets of your organization?
3. What are the KEY GAPS in Your organization as an organization and in terms of its activities?
4. What do you think are the Opportunities for the organization? What would you like to see be developed over the next 10 years?)
5. What are your aspirations or vision for your organization?
6. What is your understanding of the aims of the City of Courtenay in the areas of art and culture?

7. How do you think your organization contributes to the achievement of these aims? Does your strategic plan align with the City's aims?

<sup>33</sup>8. Who do you have or wish to see as collaborators and partners for your organization? What do they offer that we are not? Where is there a fit?

9. Would your organization benefit from additional support from the City? In which particular areas?

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## Non-Profit Life Cycles Analysis

|  | Start Up<br>Energy and passion are highest but systems generally lag far behind   | Growth<br>Program opportunity and audience demand exceed systems and operating capabilities   | Mature<br>Org has reputation for a steady production cycle, a relevant program, and a solid operation.                              | Decline<br>Making status quo decisions based on internal factors.  | Turnaround<br>Taking decisive action to regain relevance and viability.  |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Programs</b>  | 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.                                     |
| <b>Management</b>  | 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, mgt perceived as leader among field peers, leader inspires confidence among all stakeholders | Committed to status quo, organizational slippage is ignored, mgt is trapped by commitment to programs                          | New leader is strong-willed w clear sense of direction; decisive and able to mobilize resources                                |
| <b>Governance</b>  | 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 mgt 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                                   |
| <b>Resources</b>   | 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 |
| <b>Systems</b>   | 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. |   |   |   |  |  |

## APPENDIX B: Full Case Studies (Jurisdictional Comparisons)

In view of their recognition of arts and culture in contributing to a higher quality of life, thriving creative economies, and growing cultural tourist destinations, the City of Revelstoke, B.C., Maple Ridge B.C., and the Town Aroua, ON's cultural strategies were considered in terms of their relevant policies and practices, size and target groups, and collaborations/partnerships. Like the City of Courtenay, each of these municipalities are home to a vibrant arts and culture community with several museums, art galleries, and theatres, as well as cultural activities and events occurring throughout the year.

### The City of Revelstoke, BC

The City of Revelstoke's [Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan \(2011-2021\)](#)<sup>34</sup> seeks to provide guidance and direction for managing parks, recreational and cultural facilities, resources, programs, infrastructure and investment over a period of 10 years. The Master Plan consists of 54 recommendations, which focus on parks facilities, trail development, facilities, recreation, culture, and implementation.

Under the Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture's budget, the City offers financial and in-kind support to arts, culture, and heritage organization and programs within the city. The Director of Parks Recreation and Culture works with the staff liaison of the Public Art Committee, which provides City Council with advice and recommendations with respect to selecting and installing public art projects. The City owns many facilities, operated by the City or by a non-profit organization, such as the Revelstoke Community Centre, Aquatics Facility, and Visual Arts Centre

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<sup>34</sup> [http://www.cityofrevelstoke.com/DocumentCenter/View/344/Parks-Rec-and-Culture-Master-Plan-Final\\_083011?bidId](http://www.cityofrevelstoke.com/DocumentCenter/View/344/Parks-Rec-and-Culture-Master-Plan-Final_083011?bidId)

Recommendations relating to recreation and culture includes:

- Coordinate Youth Engagement Initiatives – develop new programs at its facilities for youth by working together with a variety of community agencies and the School District, support non-profit community programs, increase quality and variety of recreation and culture program for all ages, and continue to offer subsidies to low-income families.
- Increase the Number and Variety of Recreation and Culture Programs – work with community agencies to increase programming, support youth programs through services in-kind, space, equipment, etc., and continue to offer low-cost swimming and skating for low-income families.
- Develop Health, Fitness, Arts & Culture for Older Adults – with the number of seniors increasing in Revelstoke, the Master Plan recommends ensuring older adults have access to a variety of programs in the Community Centre and Seniors Centre. In particular, the recommendation highlights the need to work with the Visual Arts Centre and Revelstoke Arts Council to provide programs that appeal to older adults interested in arts and culture.
- Update the 2006 Culture Strategy – Created in 2006, the Culture Strategy was never adopted as council policy. The recommendations emphasize the need to update the culture policy to reflect contemporary circumstances through a 10-year plan.
- Inventory of Culturally Significant Sites – Public survey results showed support for protecting culturally significant sites. The recommendations urged working with First Nations, community organizations, other levels of government, and industry to prepare an inventory of culturally significant sites for protection and promotion.
- Improve Coordination with Recreation, Arts, and Culture Service Providers – The City of Revelstoke and surrounding areas are served by a significant number of non-profit and government organizations providing a variety of arts and culture services. The recommendations included initiating quarterly meetings with recreation, arts, and culture service providers. They also called for investigating opportunities for collaboration for program delivery and grant opportunities.

Other related initiatives that were recommended for the City of Revelstoke included an updated system for program registration and bookings, a review of the existing fees and charges, and an analysis of staffing levels.

The strategy from Revelstoke is relevant to Courtenay because of the City's focus in ensuring there is a diversity of recreational and cultural programming for all ages, including youth and seniors. Furthermore, it highlights the need for the City to work with community agencies in the delivery of the program, which could include in-kind support, space, equipment, etc. For example, to increase the number of youth programming, the City could work with community agencies and the School District. The recommendations also highlight the need to coordinate and collaborate among the various non-profit and government organizations to ensure effective use of limited resource, improve information sharing and the provision of coordinated programs and services. Not only would this would improve access to expertise within the City, but access to grants as well.

## The City of Maple Ridge, BC

The City of Maple Ridge's [Culture Plan: Walking Together](#)<sup>35</sup> outlines the strategic direction for advancing and investing the City's cultural development, including arts services; festivals and events; programs; and facilities. The City sought to create a plan using a place-based approach that would strengthen, harmonize and raise the profile of the City's cultural endeavors to create a unique identity, with opportunities for placemaking, and the celebration of the community's diverse heritage and culture.

The Culture Plan aims to be a living document that serves as a roadmap to guide the development of the arts, culture, and heritage for the next 10 years. The Culture Plan seeks to involve and empower the community to improve access to and use of culture facilities; support arts and culture organizations to meet the needs of a changing community; enhance service delivery through public and private partnership, and establish processes to guide arts and culture service delivery.

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<sup>35</sup> <http://mapleridge.ca/DocumentCenter/View/16527/Maple-Ridge-Culture-Plan>

The City of Maple Ridge’s Culture Plan outlines six strategic priorities:

- Connection, Capacity and Collaboration – Through the City’s strategic direction, department, bylaws, policies and programs, the City recognized it had a role to play in capacity-building. Moreover, the recommendations also seek to invest in capacity-building and foster collaborations through knowledge-sharing, gatherings, and skills development opportunities for volunteers and administration; and work with neighborhoods to encourage a distributed model of arts, culture and heritage activity and connection points.
- Awareness & Visibility – In order to value, celebrate, and integrate arts and culture into community life, the Culture Plan emphasizes the need to develop and implement a comprehensive art and culture communications strategy to build audiences and awareness. Moreover, it highlights the need to celebrate Maple Ridge’s story and sense of place, which includes expanding the Public Art Program and expanding support for the Artist-in-Resident Program.
- Culture Tourism & Creative Entrepreneurship – In order to be recognized as an all-season cultural tourism destination and home to a thriving creative industry, the Culture Plan emphasizes the need to continue to

enhance understanding amongst stakeholders and decisionmakers on the value of arts, culture and heritage and the creative community as part of Maple Ridge’s tourism attraction and destination branding. The Culture Plan also highlights the need to leverage local cultural resources and assets to distinguish Maple Ridge as a cultural destination; further integrate creative economy strategies into economic development planning; and work with creative entrepreneurs on skills developments.

- Youth & Family Arts – As participants and producers of art, young people and families are active and involved in the arts. The Culture Plan recognizes the need to address barriers and develop mechanisms which will allow access for youth and children and encourage family participation. It also highlights the need to create and develop ways to nurture and celebrate the ambition, enthusiasm, and talent of local children and youth in the arts; increase city-wide family arts opportunities; and sustain a youth and family arts sector and initiatives by developing capacity in the community.
- Indigenous Cultural Heritage & Arts – To increase understanding of the rich cultural heritage of the Katzie and Kwantlen peoples, and increase opportunities for Indigenous contemporary arts practice more generally,

the Culture Plan highlights the need to ensure that Indigenous voices and stories are reflected in on-going cultural planning; build connections between the local Indigenous communities and the broader Maple Ridge community through art; and support efforts to reconnect and preserve language and place names.

- Multiculturalism and Social Inclusion – To ensure everyone feels they can participate in the cultural life, the Culture Plan emphasizes the need to foster an understanding that community identity and wellness are enhanced and strengthened by diversity and inclusive participation; promote social change arts practices, and arts-based strategies for addressing matters of civic importance; and celebrate Maple Ridge’s rich ethnic and cultural diversity, and heritage legacy through culinary-arts and music based festivals and events.

The strategy from Maple Ridge is relevant to Courtenay because of the comparable understanding of the role cities plays in advancing cultural life for its residents. With a vision of growing community through culture, Maple Ridge’s Culture Plan emphasizes the need to ensure everyone feels they can participate in the cultural life of the city. To strengthen diversity and inclusion, the Culture Plan emphasizes the need to continue engagement and dialogue with the multicultural community; youth, seniors, new

residents, immigrants, people with disabilities and the LGBTQ2S+ and gender diverse community. In particular, the Culture Plan highlights that culture can be a tool to enhance dialogue and opportunities for marginalized communities through inclusivity initiatives, such as ticketed access, free events, and programs with identified partners. By working with relevant community organizations, the creation of a community Arts Cultural Accessibility Fund would also help minimize barriers for these communities to partake in the cultural life of the city.

To ensure there is continual dialogue, the City acknowledges it can play a role in convening a Cultural Leadership Roundtable meeting that provides an opportunity for collaboration, information-sharing, and event coordination. Membership at the Cultural Roundtable would include representation from arts and culture organizations, Indigenous communities, and the City’s tourism and economic development division. To support the City’s planning process, the Cultural Roundtable would be a strong resource to assist with the planning and implementation of programs and initiatives.

Most importantly, the plan recognizes the need to integrate culture strategically within City Hall particularly in economic development and tourism planning. While the cultural manager role is still housed with Parks, Recreation and

Culture, a lot of interdepartmental team work has been advanced over the past two years to ensure a cultural lens is adding value to City planning. This is an important marker in cultural development—to see the shift from a programmatic lens to strategic— in achieving the City’s broader goals.

### The Town of Aurora, Ont.

The Town of Aurora’s [Culture Master Plan \(2014-2019\)](https://www.aurora.ca/Thingstodo/Documents/2014-05-20%20staff%20report%20pr14-022%20attachment%201.pdf)<sup>36</sup> provides a strategy to leverage local culture resources to grow the economy, to improve quality of life, and to build and sustain a sense of community cohesion and pride. The Culture Master Plan was developed by a Working Group appointed by Council, comprised of representatives from the City and individuals representing a range of cultural, community, and business interests. The Culture Plan was developed through an extensive engagement process to ensure the direction and priorities reflect the community’s ideas as well as the City’s needs and opportunities.

The Culture Master Plan is built on four strategic directions with recommended actions:

- Define the Municipality’s Role and Build Partnership – emphasizes addressing administrative and resource requirements to implement the plan; and build and sustain public, private and community partnership.
- Expand Culture’s Role in Economic Development – highlights the need to leverage cultural and heritage resources to support downtown revitalization, to grow Aurora’s creative cultural industries; and expand tourism.
- Build a Strong and Vital Cultural Sector – emphasizes the need to strengthen collaboration among cultural and heritage groups; to increase awareness of cultural resources; and to build on current activities to strengthen festival and events.
- Enhance Access to Cultural Resources – highlights the need to respond to the cultural aspiration of an increasingly diverse community; to promote participation in cultural activities from across the community; and to address the needs of youth and seniors in the community.

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<sup>36</sup> <https://www.aurora.ca/Thingstodo/Documents/2014-05-20%20staff%20report%20pr14-022%20attachment%201.pdf>

The strategy from the Town of Aurora is relevant to Courtenay because a thriving cultural community depends on public, private, and community partnerships. To build and sustain these partnerships, the Culture Master Plan recommends the recruitment of champions from the community to act as advocates to support the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan and ongoing cultural development. Furthermore, it also recommends the creation of a Community Leadership Group that supports the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan, but also seeks to find solutions to problems. The creation of an Annual Cultural Summit is also recommended, which provides an opportunity for business and community leaders to explore opportunities and challenges a thriving cultural community. Members of the community-at-large and cultural stakeholders are then well positioned to review the progress of the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan and identify new opportunities and initiatives. Furthermore, the Summit can be a platform for striking task-based working groups to advance cultural issues and initiatives.

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<sup>37</sup> <http://www.salmonarm.ca/documentcenter/view/641>

## City of Salmon Arm, BC

The Official Community Plan characterizes the town as “lifestyle-oriented” in their focus on the quality and quantity of arts, culture and community activities, services, and facilities. The scenic backdrop of Shuswap lake and surrounding mountains frames the historic town of 17,706 residents.

The Community Plan recommends a facility focus on promoting heritage protection, recreation, and parks. The report recognizes a thriving volunteer culture (such as the OHS members who support the museum and archives) and that there’s growing interest in the region’s Heritage.

The Community Plan and Strategic Plan offer the following notable approaches to arts and culture:

- Develop Facilities for Culture and Recreation – the public survey in the 2013 Strategic Plan<sup>37</sup> called for a medium-term goal for a multi-use community arts center. Early plans for funding included a partnership with community organizations, the City, and the Province and that the city would have an indirect roll in these projects.

- [Establish the City's roll in Heritage Conservation](#)<sup>38</sup> – The 2009 Heritage Strategy called for adaptive re-use of historic buildings.
- To achieve this, it requires:
  1. The identification of heritage resources in planning reports and local land use plans.
  2. Measures to retain and utilize buildings to meet civic goals
  3. Identify and mediate the impact of proposed land use changes on these assets. (p.27)
- [Identify, Promote, Preserve, and Protect Heritage Resources](#)<sup>39</sup> – To achieve this goal, the report recommends the use of mapping and planning tools to identify and protect heritage resources on public and private land. This includes planning policies that encourage new development to respect buildings, sites, and features with heritage significance. It also calls for increased support of the R.J. Haney Heritage Village and Museum, Salmon Arm Art Gallery, and the Old Court House façade. (p.127)
- Official Community Plan Review – The City of Salmon Arm recognizes that the official community plan was last made in 2011 and requires a review now that a decade has almost passed.
- Develop a Cultural Master Plan – The City of Salmon Arm has made a long-range intention to develop an arts and cultural master plan, and in-depth heritage strategy, which was noted in their 2013 Strategic Plan. They aim to develop a comprehensive review, following their 2011 Official Community Plan, between (2016 and 2021). The Heritage Strategy (2009) recommends working collaboratively on Indigenous cultural projects.
- Overcome Barriers to Support – While the 2011 Community Plan speaks optimistically about the volunteer culture, the 2009 Heritage report highlights that some arts and cultural organizations feel pressure to develop and implement policy, achieve operational costs and recruit volunteers.

In terms of cultural assets and resources the following events and venues are named in the 2011 Community Plan:

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<sup>38</sup> <http://www.salmonarm.ca/DocumentCenter/View/108>

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.salmonarm.ca/DocumentCenter/View/52>

- The Salmon Arm Art Gallery
- The Salmar Theatre and Film Festival
- The Roots and Blues Festival
- Wednesdays on the Wharf
- The Ross Street Plaza Performances
- The Salmon Arm Museum and Archives
- R.J. Haney Heritage Village and Museum

#### **Noted Heritage and Conservation Sites**

- Haney Heritage House
- Art Gallery – 70 Hudson Ave. N.E
- The Train Station, Art Gallery, and Old Court House Façade – downtown core
- Salmon Arm Bay, the Shuswap Lake foreshore
- Greenway Plan (in the OCP)
- Protection of Orchard Houses
- Zoning Developed to create and protect the Turner Creek Trail

#### **Noted Sources of Support**

- Grants from the Shuswap District Arts Council
- Shuswap Art Gallery Association (SAGA) and Public Art Gallery
- Donations from Historian and OHS life member Denis Marshall
- Shuswap District Arts Council

#### **Budgeting for Arts and Culture**

The 2019 consolidated expenditure budget for recreation and cultural services is set to increase year over year; the 2019 budget goal is \$4,569,385 and the 2023 goal is \$4,946,049. This reflects a 5-year increase of \$376,664. Within this budget, the Recreation Centre typically receives 3 million.

### Recreation and Cultural Services 5-Year Operating Budget

| 2019      | 2020      | 2021      | 2022      | 2023      |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 4,569,385 | 4,660,773 | 4,753,988 | 4,849,068 | 4,946,049 |

Source: City of Salmon Arm 2019-2023 FP Bylaw (Op)<sup>40</sup>

### Recreation and Cultural Services 5-year Departmental Summary (Capital)

| 2019    | 2020    | 2021      | 2022    | 2023    |
|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|
| 944,485 | 333,334 | 1,235,030 | 335,592 | 319,871 |

Source: City of Salmon Arm 2019-2023 FP Bylaw<sup>41</sup>

The strategy from Salmon Arm is relevant to Courtenay because of their comparable regional geography, and their third-party delivery of arts and cultural services through a fee-for-service agreement (FFSA).

The City provides annual support funding through a fee-for-service arrangement with the following organizations.

The following reflects the 2019 budget:

- The Salmon Arm Museum and Archives - \$80,000
- The Trial Alliance - \$50,000
- The Roots and Blues Festival - \$90,000
- The Salmon Arm Arts Centre - \$41,000 (+\$6,000 increase for 2019)

The contract is for a 3-year term and outlines the following terms for service delivery:

- General advice on Arts and Culture issues as requested by Council;
- Exhibitions, opening receptions and artist talks;
- Wednesday On the Wharf: summer concert series;
- Arts programming for young families, children and youth;
- Arts outreach programs for the public;
- Education programs for local schools and groups;
- Arts referral and support services;
- Meeting and working studio spaces for individuals and cultural groups.

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.salmonarm.ca/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/01072019-499>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.salmonarm.ca/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/01072019-499>

## The City of Nelson, BC

Nelson is characterized by its waterways, mountain vistas, a charming downtown core, quality recreation facilities and opportunities. The [2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan](#) highlights councils' intention for a 3-year focus on a solution centered goals they aimed to deliver during their term.

In the plan, the Mayor and Council recognize that it's Nelson's residents that inspire the City's vibrant, unique, and charming character. They intended that the plan offer a milestone in the City's ongoing strategic engagement and planning process, aimed at strengthening business, cultural and community relationships.

The plan concisely profiles current strategic goals and in-progress actions to achieve them. As an aspect of the following missions - to enhance the sustainability of city services and infrastructure and to expand local jobs and local prosperity - they set the following intentions for their approach to delivering arts and culture in Nelson:

- Public Art & Renewal – Public art seen as a means to beautify streets and spaces, which rely on design to attract investment and improve quality of life. To host key community events and festivals the city recognizes that park spaces and venue need increased capacity (p.13).

- Partnerships to Deliver Culture – Culture and recreation are vital to the region's economic growth, and the plan encourages strategic partnerships to host and deliver vibrant events, festivals, and business development opportunities. Essential for program delivery, relationships with businesses, community groups and government organizations is crucial (p.14). The [Regional District of Central Kootenay's 2016 Recreation & Culture Master Plan](#) also profiles Nelson and emphasizes that developing partnerships, with providers of recreation and cultural programming, is critical for delivery.

Relevant to Courtenay is the administrative approach and responsibility the city's taken to its arts and cultural programs. As a municipality, the City works to engage multiple stakeholders, with the support of a planning committee such as the CDC (Cultural Development Committee) that meets monthly to offer high-level strategic approaches to further heritage, creativity, diversity, and excellence in Nelson's lifestyle.

The committee has developed a range of [publicly available](#) policy, bylaw, and reference documents to guide and shape the cultural sector. These documents, are intended to guide

the working groups, that coordinate the city’s festival, heritage, and public art programs.

The strategic plan is timeline and goal oriented and developed with political sensitivity, to the 4-year term the mayor and council has in office.

The Recreation Master Plan recommends that the Nelson and District Recreation Commission preserve, maintain, and manage important indoor and outdoor spaces in a manner that supports community participation (p.16). Vital recreation, cultural programming, and studio space are offered through the city-owned youth center and also the civic center. Within the Recreation Master Plan Nelson’s special events (64%) are cited as a leading facility use (p.104).

## The City of Sechelt, BC

Sechelt is a scenic coastal community of 10,000 residents, located on the lower Sunshine Coast, 50 km northwest of Vancouver. Sechelt represents 20 years of arts and cultural

driven policy and planning and offers a heritage focused legacy that extends to their foundation in the 1880s.

The following 5 approaches are recommended in their 2011 Arts, Culture, and Heritage Strategic Plan:<sup>42</sup>

- Importance of Arts Culture and Heritage – To support Sechelt’s diverse community arts and cultural programs, council members are asked to demonstrate a belief in the importance of this sector to the economy, social health, and community development of the District.
- Advisory Committee – Council appoints qualified members to a citizen-based arts, culture, and heritage committee. This group is tasked with seeking grants, and furthering relationships with arts, culture, and heritage groups, and advising the council on their recommendations. The committee is tasked with all revisions to the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Strategic Plan and hosting an annual open house that invites and offers public presentations and discussions regarding arts, culture, and heritage.

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<sup>42</sup>

<http://www.sechelt.ca/Portals/0/public%20document%20library/Committees/>

<arts,%20culture%20and%20heritage%20advisory/Arts,%20Culture%20and%20Heritage%20Strategic%20Plan%20-%20Amended%20Sept%202011.pdf>

- Celebrating Community – The Policy recognizes the value of collaborating with cultural groups, and that the City has a role in generating public visibility of events and other programming. Cultural providers are characterized as valuable resources; education providers and businesses are encouraged to focus on promoting cultural tourism and arts-friendly development. Developers are asked to treat public art like other community amenities.
- Facilities – Council is required to develop a long-term plan for the creation, preservation and use of Arts, Cultural, and heritage facilities. This includes artifacts, written and taped histories, pictures and additional properties. This includes a focus on Rockwood Lodge and updates to the heritage inventory.
- Budget – A specific budget account recognizes the council’s support for arts, culture, and heritage is annually reviewed. Any needs, opportunities, and growth is done with sensitivity to broader regional impacts and initiatives. Partnership with the Sunshine Coast Regional District is recommended to coordinate any inter-regional goals.

In 2012, to administer their mandate, the City hired an Arts, Culture and Communications Coordinator to oversee cultural workshops, community consultation and mapping, public art, heritage, and cultural events. The City’s website also offers a public-facing resource center that highlights the planning process and relevant engagement events. They also offer a public art collection, that’s on display year-round; it showcases works dating to 1902. Vital annual events and guides available via the website include festivals that focus on the Written Arts, Summer Music Series, Farmers’ and Artisans’ Markets, and the Sunshine Coast Art Crawl.

The strategy from Sechelt is relevant to Courtenay because of the role the city took to recognize the community’s grass roots creativity and pro-arts advocacy and hire a coordinator to support municipal and regional arts planning. Courtenay also has inter-regional considerations; it’s at the core of the Comox Valley Regional District which includes communities such as Comox, and Cumberland, Hornby, and Denman Island. To address this the Sunshine Coast Regional Cultural Strategy was published in April 2007 following the Sunshine Coast Regional District Regional Cultural Scan released June 30, 2006.

