



## **Committee of the Whole Report**

### **For the Meeting of December 14, 2017**

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**To:** Committee of the Whole **Date:** November 30, 2017  
**From:** Jocelyn Jenkyns, Acting City Manager  
**Subject:** Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan (2018-2022)

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

Approve the proposed Arts and Culture Master Plan and Implementation Framework.

Extend the Create Victoria Advisory Group term from March 2018 to December 2018 to advise staff and Council on the first year of implementation.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Following the Council Workshop on November 9<sup>th</sup>, staff and the consultant team consolidated the feedback from Council, the public and City staff and incorporated key feedback themes into the proposed final plan.

Feedback indicates support for the plan, vision, cultural policy and action items. There was overwhelming support for the City to take a lead role in cultural space development, funding, and coordination as there is currently a gap in cultural space coordination in the region.

Other key feedback themes include:

- More public art opportunities to co-create art and support community art practises.
- The need to place a higher value on emerging artists, from facilitating more grants, to support for more all ages shows, to ensuring more local acts get performance opportunities at summer festivals. The scarcity of performance and exhibition spaces and opportunities for young artists was a common feedback theme.
- The need to encourage the development of digital capacities within and amongst artists and cultural organizations including the city branding itself as the place for emerging tech talent.
- Many suggested a shared co-working space or “hub” with shared access to studios, performance spaces and training programs.
- Need to improve outreach and cultural event awareness. A centralized “one-stop shop” platform.
- Need for a concentrated focus on the tourism industry promoting arts and culture events in Victoria.

- Suggestion to simplify the language in the plan and consider shortening the plan for ease of navigation.

An Implementation Framework accompanies the plan to ensure the plan is actionable with key stakeholders identified, timeframes, deliverables and metrics included. Staff will provide an annual update on the Master Plan and revise the Implementation Framework annually to ensure it aligns with the community's needs and adapts to social, economic and environmental changes in the community. The Create Victoria Advisory Group will continue to meet in 2018 to advise staff on implementation.

For 2018, the key strategic focus will be to convene, engage and broaden outreach to the arts, culture and event community and reposition the department to function as a one-stop shop to support community cultural development. A revamped website accompanied by easy to find information, toolkits and supported by a comprehensive communication campaign will help build awareness about the City's services, including a new role and function to support cultural space development. Exploration of a shared art space, use of vacant storefronts for exhibition and pop-up events and matchmaking function for available spaces will also be undertaken under the department's new role function to support cultural spaces.

Resource allocation will be included as part of the annual budgeting process and included in the City's Financial Plan. 2018 action items (bolded in the Implementation Framework) will be funded from the current Culture operating budget. Increase to the Festival Investment Grant program has been included for Council consideration in the 2018 Financial Plan.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to present a final proposed Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan and Implementation Framework for Council consideration and extend the term for the Create Victoria Advisory Group.

## **BACKGROUND**

Cultural planning can be defined as a process of inclusive community consultation and decision making that helps local government identify cultural resources and think strategically about how these resources can help a community to achieve civic goals. It's a strategic approach that integrates the community's cultural resources into a wide range of municipal planning initiatives to fulfil strategic objectives including social cohesion and economic prosperity.

The draft plan proposes a vision, cultural policy, and four key strategic priority areas with goals, objectives and action items attached to each key strategic area. The four strategic areas: Connecting People and Spaces, Building Cultural Leadership, Telling Our Story, Being Future-Ready, align with the City's cultural vision, values and guiding principles, as well as the City of Victoria's Strategic Plan, the Official Community Plan, Neighbourhood Plans and the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

Since engagement began in September 2016, Create Victoria Project Team has participated in 27 engagement activities, reached 1,950 people in-person, and increased the Arts Victoria culture map by 87 new resources. A wide range of engagement strategies were used to encourage two way conversation, and included surveys, meetings and presentations, a targeted key influencer workshop, and broad community engagement which featured a series of Cultural Cafés.

In Phase 3 of engagement from June to September 2017, 293 people provided input into the draft plan. Throughout this process the Create Victoria Advisory Group, led by Councillor Madoff and Councillor Loveday, have provided ongoing expertise, knowledge and input into the planning process and draft plan.

## ISSUES & ANALYSIS

### Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan

A summary of feedback received to date is attached to the report in Appendix A.

Results from the survey indicate support for the vision (62.41%), cultural policy (82.8%) and strategic priority areas. Respondents support simplified language for the overall plan and ways to shorten the plan to make it easier to navigate.

Other key feedback themes include:

- City to take a lead role in activating underutilized spaces including City-led facilitation of shared spaces and resources particularly in view of physical and sensory accessibility needs and gender-inclusive cultural facilities.
- More public art opportunities to co-create art and support community art practises.
- The need to place a higher value on emerging artists, from facilitating more grants, to support for more all ages shows, to ensuring more local acts get performance opportunities at summer festivals. The scarcity of performance and exhibition spaces and opportunities for young artists was a common feedback theme.
- The need to encourage the development of digital capacities within and amongst artists and cultural organizations including the City branding itself as the place for emerging tech talent.
- Many suggested a shared co-working space or “hub” with shared access to studios, performance spaces and training programs.
- Need to improve outreach and cultural event awareness in Victoria. A centralized “one-stop shop” platform.
- Need for a concentrated focus on the tourism industry promoting arts and culture events in Victoria.

### Vision

The vision “*Victoria radiates creativity and thrives as a home to creative people and everyday artistic experiences*” was developed in consultation with the Advisory Group and based on engagement feedback in Phase One and Two. The vision is aspirational and encourages everyday encounters and experiences in the creative and cultural life of the city.

### Strategic Priority 1: Connecting People and Spaces

*Goal: Everyone feels welcome and able to access affordable spaces for creative participation, production and enjoyment.*

Significant support at 90.32% (71.77% strongly support + 18.55% support) for this priority and goal.

Cultural space needs were the number one issue that was raised throughout the engagement phase of the project. Space need challenges included affordability, difficult and restrictive regulatory environment (i.e. zoning, fees and permits), loss of existing spaces due to

development, lack of flexible pop up spaces and indoor/outdoor event spaces, and limited capital funding. Based on this feedback staff propose significant staff time and investment in this area.

Action items in year one include activating vacant storefronts for cultural use including exhibitions, pop up and temporary events, continuing the cultural space conversation with stakeholders, continuing discussion on a shared use art space in Bastion Square, resolution to the McPherson Theatre discussion with regional partners and updating Arts Victoria to include a more robust online platform to matching space availability with cultural space needs in the community.

## **Strategic Priority 2: Building Cultural Leadership**

*Goal: The City facilitates cultural leadership by collaborating with partners, and supporting and guiding initiatives.*

78.05% (40.65% strongly support + 37.40% support) of respondents indicates support for this priority and goal.

By prioritizing a role of collaboration and facilitation, the City will continue to act at a strategic level as a convenor, broker and collaborator, wherein it doesn't necessarily have to be the lead and can divest itself of implementation where appropriate. Building the capacity of artists, creative entrepreneurs, and non-profit arts organizations and strengthening skill development will help to create a stronger, sustainable creative ecosystem over the long term.

Action items in 2018 include the Arts, Culture and Events Office to reposition as a "one stop shop" and review processes to mitigate barriers for public art, festival and event requests and developing a communication strategy to assist the community with accessing and understanding City services in arts, culture and event delivery.

## **Strategic Priority 3: Telling Our Story**

*Goal: Victoria champions and promotes its artistic excellence and creative scene, and continues to preserve and conserve its artistic and heritage legacies.*

72.36% (44.72% strongly support + 27.64% support) of respondents indicated support for this priority and goal.

A focus on continuing the journey of reconciliation with Indigenous people will continue. Ensuring Indigenous voices and stories are shared, and opportunities to learn about reconciliation and the shared history of Indigenous Peoples and all Canadians, through inclusive dialogue, celebration and performance will be explored through current programs and projects earmarked in 2018.

## **Strategic Priority 4: Being Future-Ready**

*Goal: Victoria leads as a Creative City through innovation in fostering a thriving creative ecosystem.*

79.51% (59.02% strongly support + 20.49% support) of respondents supported this priority and goal.

Through bridging technology, creative entrepreneurship, private and public sectors, economic and tourism development, and arts, culture and heritage, this strategic priority area will be a key shift in

Victoria's next phase of cultural development. By being forward-thinking, Victoria will be ready to serve a changing cultural landscape and new arts era.

Strengthening ties between the tech community and culture community will be undertaken to develop possible collaboration and project development in future years. The key role for the City will be to facilitate and convene stakeholders and support community driven projects.

## **Implementation Framework**

A proposed Implementation Framework accompanies the Master Plan to ensure the plan is action-oriented and provides a road map for future investment, resource allocation and priorities for the City of Victoria, stakeholders and the community. The framework includes action items, key partners both lead and supporting roles, time frame, how the action item will begin (first steps), and how we will measure the impact.

For 2018, the key strategic focus will be to convene, engage and broaden outreach with the community on arts, culture and event service delivery and reposition the department to function as a one-stop shop to support community cultural development. A revamped website accompanied by easy to find information, tool kits and supported by a comprehensive communication campaign to build awareness about the City's services.

In accordance with the cultural policy, attention has been taken to ensuring the City's role and function be focused on its enabling, facilitating and convening role. This can be defined as supporting the existing creative and cultural sector rather than attempt at producing or directing towards planned outcomes. Through this role function, the City will assist and 'enable' the sector to achieve community driven or organically developed initiatives. To support this, the City will also assist the community with navigation of the regulatory processes, streamline and remove regulatory barriers and support initiatives that build capacity in the community. In this environment, the City focuses its resources on projects and strategies that allow artists and creative practitioners to be the drivers of creative content and be open, flexible and nimble in the approach, take creative risks and incubate new innovative ideas.

The current Senior Cultural Planner will continue to manage the implementation of the plan with support and advice from the Create Victoria Advisory Group. As the term of the Advisory Group expires in March 2018, staff recommend extending the term to December 2018 to the end of the first year of implementation.

## **OPTIONS AND IMPACTS**

### **Option 1 (Recommended)**

Staff recommend that Council approve the proposed Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan and Implementation Framework and extend the term for the Advisory Group to December 2018.

### **Option 2**

Direct staff to make further refinements to the Plan and Implementation Framework based on feedback from Council.

### *Accessibility Impact Statement*

The Master Plan contains a number of directions that will make public spaces and cultural facilities more accessible to people of all abilities and is detailed under Objective 1.4 in the Plan "*Facilitate social inclusion, promote diversity, community wellness and accessibility in cultural spaces*".

## *Strategic Plan 2015-2018*

The City's Strategic Plan identifies the development of an Arts and Culture Master Plan as a 2016 Action which states:

- Develop Arts and Culture Master Plan
- Fund an Economic Impact Study linked to an Arts and Culture Master Plan
- Identify scope and develop budget strategy for a new Central Library and for a library branch at Capital Park in James Bay

## *Impacts to 2015 – 2018 Financial Plan*

Increase to the Festival Investment Grant program has been included as part of the 2018 Financial Plan for Council consideration. Realignment and cost saving in the Arts and Culture Operating Budget allows for funding for 2018 initiatives to be funded from current operations rather than a request for additional resources in 2018. Budgetary impacts to fund action items in future years will be included as part of the annual budgeting process and included in the Financial Plan.

## *Official Community Plan Consistency Statement*

The proposed Arts and Culture Master Plan is consistent with the direction in OCP Chapter 16 Arts and Culture.

16.9 Provide direction for cultural planning through the development and regular update of a Cultural Plan, that:

16.9.1 Establishes a vision and action plan for arts and culture in Victoria;

16.9.2 Seeks opportunities for partnership with the public, private and non-profit sectors;

16.9.3 Maintains, develops and enhances the delivery of City arts and culture programs;

16.9.4 Enhances support to local, non-profit groups engaged in arts or culture programs;

16.9.5 Sets targets for future cultural spaces, including new or upgraded civic, institutional and private facilities; and,

16.9.6 Identifies tools to secure new cultural spaces, including: senior government funding; land donations; developer contributions, private donations; and, changes to regulations.

16.10 Maintain and regularly update an inventory of cultural resources.

## **CONCLUSION**

The culmination of community input and extensive research and analysis has provided a road map to guide City investment and priorities towards the vision of an inclusive and creative city. Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan can provide momentum for the City to progress forward by leveraging and harnessing our cultural resources to meet civic and community goals. Staff look forward to working closely with partners and the community to realize the vision and goals set out in the plan.

Respectfully submitted,



Nichola Reddington  
Senior Cultural Planner

**Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:**



**Date:** December 8, 2017

**List of Attachments**

Appendix A: Summary of Feedback  
Appendix B: Create Victoria Arts and Culture Master Plan  
Appendix C: Create Victoria Implementation Framework