



mississauga
culture
master plan



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Executive Summary

Introduction

This is a Culture Master Plan for a young city that welcomes the world. Its short-term vision focuses on building a cultural infrastructure that is community driven and neighbourhood focused. It envisions strengthened arts, culture and heritage organizations, a broadly distributed range of opportunities for citizens of all ages and backgrounds to participate in a wide variety of cultural activity. It calls upon all departments inside City Hall to work collaboratively with new partners from the community and business spheres to build strong cultural institutions, complete communities and promote new forms of wealth creation.

The Mississauga Culture Master Plan provides a framework and a longer-term vision that identifies key opportunities and strategies that the new Culture Division can implement over the next five years to help transform Mississauga into a culturally significant Canadian city. The Plan recommends key actions to build financial stability and increase the organizational capacity of cultural organizations, strengthen cultural infrastructure at the neighbourhood level, strengthen the flow and access to information about cultural resources and activities and

leverage public works and private sector development to enhance cultural resources and create artful, livable communities.

The actions recommended in the Culture Plan support the five pillars for change of the Strategic Plan. Its strategic directions complement those of the Growth Management Strategy and the Official Plan Review. The Culture Plan sets out strategies and processes to develop and maintain cultural vitality in Mississauga – the fourth pillar of sustainability. It introduces the cultural lens that along with economic, environmental and social policies are the key tools of a sustainable plan to re-urbanize and transform Mississauga.



Purpose

The purpose of the Culture Master Plan is to:

- Articulate a sustainable, long-term vision for arts, culture and heritage in the City of Mississauga.
- Develop a list of actionable recommendations and an implementation plan for the next five years.
- Develop comprehensive knowledge of the arts, culture and heritage resources in Mississauga and make it accessible to city staff and the cultural, community and business sectors.
- Identify and assess gaps in service
- Identify growth prospects, avenues for partnership with external stakeholders, and opportunities for collaboration among City departments to achieve Mississauga's strategic objectives.

Guiding Principles

The Culture Plan draws from established best practices in municipal cultural planning and is guided by six principles:

1. Create cities where people want to live

Focus on the development of cultural resources, support for creative activities, and quality of place rather than on individual disciplines like dance or theatre.

2. Celebrate multiculturalism and interculturalism

The interaction of people of diverse cultures, traditions and backgrounds creates synergies that produce new ideas, an authentic identity, talents and perspectives that fuel innovation and have positive economic and social impacts.

3. Attract and retain talent

All residents, cultural organizations, businesses, industries, educational and community agencies nurture artistic and creative talent and incubate new ideas and initiatives.

4. Foster entrepreneurship and innovative businesses

Develop practical partnerships and programs to support cultural and creative businesses in the City and broaden dialogue about creativity and the knowledge economy.

5. Collaborate and build partnerships

Build and maintain strong support networks and relationships among all orders of government, individuals, business and community groups.

6. Create an authentic and shared identity.

Value all the elements of the local cultural system and the interrelationships between them.

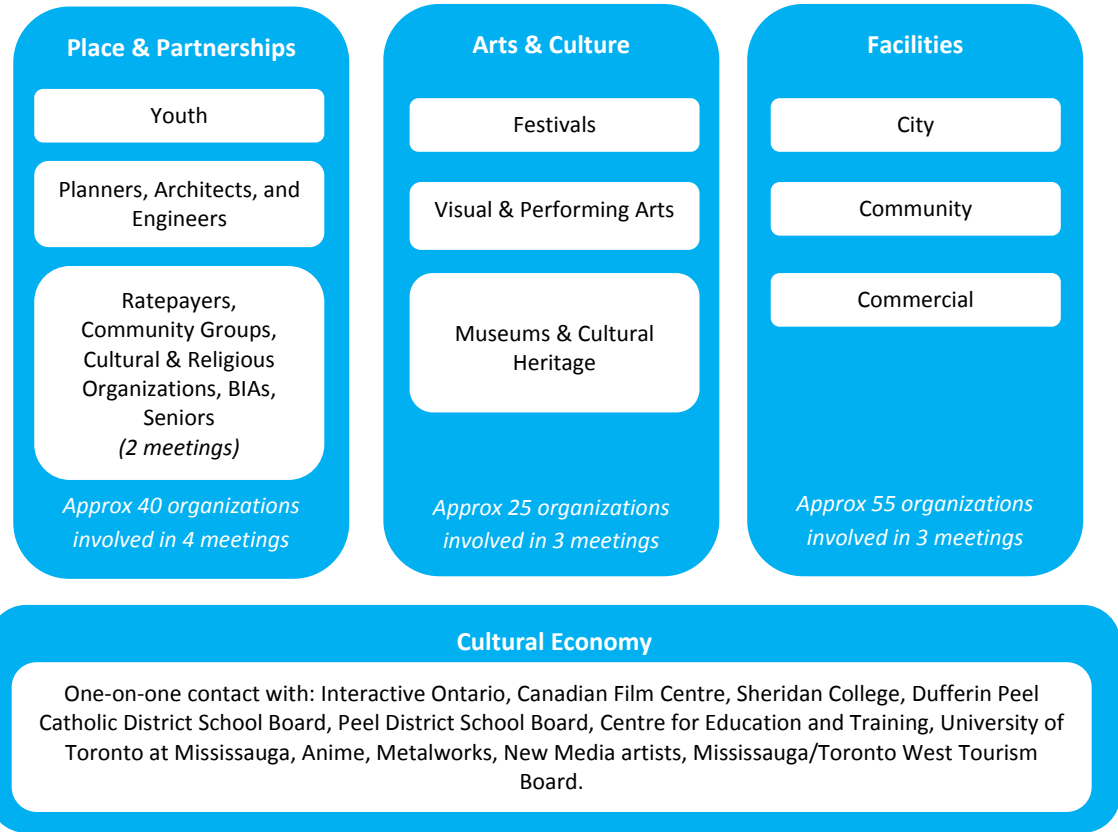


Engagement

A range of opportunities were created for the general public and cultural stakeholders to participate in the development of the Culture Plan. The City’s webpage for the plan generated 3,022 views. Blogsauga.ca generated 818 views. 107 people participated in interviews and small group discussions. A public workshop was attended by 130 people – 50 attended a follow-up meeting. 460 people completed the General Population Survey.

Step 1 Contact lists were developed based on suggestions from members of Council, leaders in the community, City staff, as well as independent research.

Step 2 One-on-one discussions and small group meetings were held with the groups in the diagram on this page.



Step 3 Public Workshop to share and seek feedback on key issues and opportunities

Step 4 On-line general population survey

Step 5 Follow-up Stakeholder and Public Meeting to share and seek feedback on emerging Strategic Directions. Approx. 50 participants

Ongoing - Project information posted online, including meeting notes, and blog post updates for comment

Ongoing - Close work with staff from the Culture Division, Steering Committee, and Leadership Team, including two presentations/discussion sessions and an education session with members of Council.

The results of the extensive engagement process for Our Future Mississauga were also carefully considered throughout the study.

Highlights of the Research

Cultural Infrastructure

There are approximately 1,000 cultural facilities and sites in Mississauga. Of these, about 10% are City-owned, about 15% are owned by the institutional or non-profit sector and the remaining portion (approximately 75%) is owned by the private sector.

There appears to be no rationale for cultural facility distribution overall within the city - as there is for branch libraries, parks, schools, recreation centres and other community amenities.

There appears to be no rationale for how cultural resources might be deployed in individual neighbourhoods either as amenities or as contributors to a critical mass of complementary uses which create a desirable destination.

Cultural planning is not well integrated within the City administration. The Culture Division, Recreation and Parks, Planning and Facilities and Property Management all have mandates for some aspect of cultural infrastructure and cultural resources.

Cultural facilities in Mississauga have no communications platform for interface with the public and no forum for dialogue among themselves.

There is a general lack of awareness in the community of spaces available for cultural activity.

Arts and Culture Grants

The low level of funding (by national standards) available to arts, culture and heritage groups in Mississauga in 2008 contributes to a range of difficulties identified by the Arts Review Taskforce in 2005. Without stable funding, organizations cannot retain the staff and volunteers necessary to build capacity and create the foundation for growth. Lack of working capital reserves (roughly equal to 20% of earned revenue) were a more significant problem for arts organizations than were deficits, including the “signature arts” groups.

Heritage

There are approximately 270 designated properties in Mississauga. 170 of these form part of the City's two heritage conservation districts: Meadowvale Village and Old Port Credit Village.

A significant number of designated buildings owned by the City stand empty and their condition is deteriorating.

One of strongest themes in consultations was the need to strengthen awareness and promotion within the heritage sector, a

message heard across the cultural sector in Mississauga.

Digital technologies are being well utilized in the museums and heritage sector.

Cultural Attractions

Mississauga has strengths in festivals and events and there is strong potential to leverage these strengths to support broader cultural development goals, a shared identity and internal tourism attractions.

The Mississauga/Toronto West Tourism Board believes that while festivals and attractions have strong appeal to local residents, at present none currently offer a unique enough tourism experience nor attract sufficient numbers of participants to warrant investing in a marketing campaign beyond the city's borders.

Mississauga is competitive in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in the celebration of South Asian history and culture. Major growth in the Mosaic Festival (18,000 in 2007 to 30,000 in 2008) points to the potential to grow visibility and attendance for events that celebrate this significant and expanding part of the population in Mississauga and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

In its third year, *My Mississauga* is a summer events series taking place at City Centre that has enjoyed significant growth in popularity

with more than 240,000 participants attending more than 70 events over 48 event days in 2008. The initiative has many strong cultural events and plays an important role in a larger place-making strategy.

The Creative and Cultural Economic Sector in Mississauga

Of the 500+ enterprises that make up Mississauga's creative and cultural economic sector, 87% are small businesses that operate with less than 50 employees. 80% percent of these are creative service enterprises, firms that produce intellectual property with both expressive and functional value, such as ad agencies, architecture and software design firms.

One in four creative and cultural economic sector (CCES) jobs in Canada is in the Toronto region. In Mississauga approximately 10,845 people or 2.8% of Mississauga's workforce have jobs in the CCES.

Nodes and Corridors

The Cultural Resources Database identifies several areas in Mississauga with noticeable concentrations of cultural resources, including Cooksville, Clarkson Village and Meadowvale. Three nodes that display the highest concentrations of cultural resources in the city are: Mississauga's downtown, Port Credit and Streetsville. Together, these three nodes

account for 245 of Mississauga's 1,500+ cultural resources.

Audience

An analysis of audiences and supporters of 'signature' arts groups found that their audiences are characterized by high levels of income and education; longstanding residence in the community; and low levels of diversity. This is consistent with audience profiles nationally.

An on-line survey was conducted for the study and found that a high percentage of survey respondents (43%) indicated they participated 'a lot' in cultural activity, while 37% said they participated a little. Of those that do not participate 7.7% (a significant percentage of the remaining responses) indicated they support the City's involvement with only 2.2% indicating they did not support this involvement.

How does Mississauga compare?

In terms of cultural infrastructure and facilities the study compared Mississauga to other Canadian cities. Financing of capital projects occurs differently in Canada than in the United States where municipalities have access to municipal bonds and in the UK where lottery funds play an important role. Cultural places in Canada are often created for the purpose of

delivering cultural products funded by national and provincial orders of government.

Mississauga is comparable to Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver in terms of population growth in recent decades; it is comparable to Vancouver, Edmonton and Winnipeg in population size; Calgary has a slightly higher population at 1 million and Mississauga has twice the population size as Halifax. Population size was used as the key basis for comparison but population growth was also an important factor.

Mississauga's public art gallery has neither the size nor profile when compared to other similar sized Canadian cities. The city is also underserved when it comes to other core cultural facilities such as museums and performance and production/rehearsal spaces such as theatres and studios (regardless of whether they are City, community or privately owned).

There are four community and city-owned museums operating in Mississauga. The other Canadian cities reviewed have from 4-10 times as many museums within their boundaries. Mississauga has 8 theatres totaling over 2,500 theatre seats. This is comparable to the number of theatres and theatre seats in Halifax, but at a third the number of seats found in Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg. Vancouver has 3 times as many theatres and over 6 times as many theatre seats as

Mississauga. VAM and LAC are two of Mississauga's few communal centres for the practice of visual arts. Vancouver, Halifax and Winnipeg has over 25 such facilities; Edmonton and Calgary have 12 and 19 respectively. Mississauga has the University of Toronto – Mississauga campus, whereas other Canadian cities have 6-7 post-secondary institutions, enhancing the availability of cultural offerings within city boundaries. This has been noted in the Our Future Mississauga Plan; attracting post-secondary institutions to Mississauga is a key goal within this plan.

To learn from other cities that are more closely comparable to Mississauga in terms of ethno-cultural diversity, proximity to a larger city with strong cultural offerings, population size and speed of growth and relative age as a city, the study chose five cities – Austin, San Jose, Milton Keynes, Vancouver and Ft. Lauderdale/Broward County. All have made substantial long-term investments in public art; all have targeted business services to support creative entrepreneurs; most have used arts and culture to make a significant contribution to downtown revitalization, intensification and tourism and all find it a challenge to provide affordable, safe and secure workspace for artists and cultural organizations. This Culture Master Plan makes recommendations in each of these areas.

Culture Master Plan Overview

The Culture Master Plan consists of seven strategic directions, 25 initiatives and more than 40 specific recommendations to guide the work of the Culture Division for the next five years and beyond. Detailed recommendations are provided in Section 3 of the report and a summary of recommended actions with an implementation time frame is provided in Section 4. The following is a brief overview:

1. Strengthen arts, culture and heritage organizations

- Increase financial allocation to arts and cultural organizations, festivals and celebrations from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per capita over next four years.
- Establish an Arts and Culture Stabilization Fund and contribute \$300,000 in 2009 to kick start this private sector led, community based initiative.
- Move Museums and Heritage Planning to the Culture Division and retain additional resources to support the importance of heritage.

2. Encourage community celebrations and festivals

- Work with Recreation and Parks to develop a strategy that identifies and assesses the contribution that celebrations and festivals can make to cultural development, tourism,

identity and economic development in Mississauga.

3. Strengthen cultural infrastructure

- Create a policy framework for the development of community driven and neighbourhood focused cultural infrastructure.
- Create a ten year capital program forecast for spending to repair existing facilities and to build new facilities.
- Complete communities with cultural infrastructure
- Establish cultural capital outreach, advocacy and partnership-building capacity in the Culture Division
- Undertake an independent study of Living Arts Centre to make recommendations about its future role in the context of the Culture Plan.

4. Build partnerships and increase collaboration

- Establish a City Interdepartmental Culture Team to advise on measures to use cultural resources to achieve Mississauga's strategic goals.
- Rename the Office of Arts and Culture as the Culture Division
- Create a Network of Cultural Partnerships in Mississauga working with the community and business sectors (Arts Stabilization Board, Festivals and Celebrations

Roundtable, Cultural Mapping Partnership)

- Review and determine clear leadership roles and responsibilities in the arts sector

5. Strengthen the flow of information

- Culture Division work with Geomatics and IT to maintain and improve the Cultural Resource Database (CRD) on an ongoing basis
- Convene a Cultural Mapping Partnership (CMP)
- Issue an annual Cultural Report Card to assess Mississauga's cultural vitality
- Develop a cultural resources application for e-maps
- Develop an Interactive Culture Website as a central hub for culture news and events

6. Identify cultural nodes and create an artful public realm

- Create a cultural node pilot project to test the use of planning tools, incentives, supports and partnerships to support cultural resources and activities in specific communities.
- Remove systemic barriers to cultural activity and incorporate the specific needs of cultural activities and facilities into the City's zoning, parking and signage regulations.
- Create an Artful Public Realm by involving artists in the early stages of

design for public works projects like the BRT, LRT, parks and roadways

- Establish a Public Art Program in the Culture Division

7. Attract and support creative individuals

- Secure affordable live / work / performance space for artists and cultural organizations through the use of planning tools and other measures.
- Work with Mississauga Business Enterprise Centre (MBEC) to provide business services support for the creative cultural sector

Ongoing Role of the Culture Division

To achieve the strategic initiatives outlined in this plan the Culture Division will need to adopt new ways of working.

The Culture Master Plan recommends that the Mississauga Culture Division act as a convener/facilitator and builder of strategic partnerships. Collaboration is the key to this approach. The study recommends that the Culture Division work within and between City departments; between the City and the wider public sector and its agencies; and with the wider community and business spheres to pursue its strategic objectives in a participatory and community based way.

It recommends that the Culture Division focus on the development of cultural resources,

support for creative activities, and the promotion of initiatives that enhance quality of place. This broader vision of cultural activity is in keeping with the transition in other large cities away from a narrowly defined focus on individual disciplines like dance or theatre.

The Culture Master Plan, the role of the Mississauga Culture Division and the Division's programs should be reviewed in five years.

The Consulting Team

The Culture Plan study team has grounded expertise in the full range of arts, culture, heritage and creative industries issues. We have expert knowledge of the physical and land use structure of Mississauga and the capacity to knit creativity and culture into the planning and strategic policies and priorities of Mississauga. We worked collaboratively with City staff to build a strategic framework to inform short-term and long-term decision-making related to building Mississauga as a global leader in 21st century creative and cultural sector development.

The team is comprised of some of the country's leading specialists in culture and creativity as driving forces in city building.

The Canadian Urban Institute

Glen Murray is one of the country's most visionary urban thinkers and strategists about the future of Canadian cities and the central place of creativity and culture in that future.

Jeff Evenson, the Project Leader, heads the CUI's strategy and engagement practice and has extensive municipal experience in cultural planning and urban development;

Nicole Swerhun is one of Canada's most innovative public engagement experts.

Charles Tilden is a Research Planner and Project Coordinator.

Novita

Brian Arnott, Principal, is Canada's leading cultural facility specialist.

Ariana Moscote Freire is Novita's head of Research.

AuthentiCity

Greg Baeker is a leading expert on approaches to creative and cultural sector development.

Artscape

Reid Henry heads up Artscape's consulting practice. He and **Pru Robey** provide a unique blend of knowledge and experience focused on nurturing and sustaining creative and cultural activity within cities.

