

The Creative Advantage

A Transformational
Action Plan for
Mississauga's Cultural
and Creative Sector



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the lands which constitute the present-day City of Mississauga as being part of the Treaty and Traditional Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, The Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and The Wendat and Wyandot Nations. We recognize these peoples and their ancestors as peoples who inhabited these lands since time immemorial. The City of Mississauga is home to many global Indigenous peoples.

Statement of Reconciliation

As a municipality, the City of Mississauga is actively working towards Reconciliation by confronting our past and our present, providing space for Indigenous peoples within their territory, to recognize and uphold their Treaty Rights and to support Indigenous peoples. We formally recognize the Anishinaabe origins of our name and continue to make Mississauga a safe space for all Indigenous peoples.



National Indigenous Peoples Day 2023 (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

Table of Contents

Land Acknowledgement and Statement of Reconciliation.....	2
Letter from Mayor.....	5
Executive Summary.....	6
Task Force Recommendations: Advancing Mississauga's Cultural and Creative Sector.....	7
We're Starting Now: Mississauga is Acting.....	9
Where We Are and What Comes Next.....	10
Let's Build a Thriving Cultural Ecosystem for Mississauga.....	20
Task Force Recommendations: Solutions We Can Deliver Together.....	23
Priority 1: Tell Stories of the Lands and People of Mississauga.....	24
Priority 2: Optimize City Systems and Processes.....	26
Priority 3: Build a Sustainable Creative Economy.....	28
Priority 4: Protect and Create Cultural Spaces.....	30
Priority 5: Elevate Mississauga as a Significant Cultural and Tourism Destination.....	32
Getting it Done.....	36
What Mississauga is Doing Now.....	37
Where More Help is Needed: Culture Barriers.....	40
Coordinating Action through Partnership.....	44
Appendix.....	47
Task Force Members.....	48
Growing the Cultural Ecosystem: Key Priorities and Actions.....	52
Culture Funding Responsibilities: Who Supports What.....	55
Definitions.....	57

The Dreamboats, Living Arts Centre (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

Dear Residents and Partners,

Mississauga stands at a defining moment in its history. As our city continues to grow and evolve, we are called to embrace the power of culture and creativity as cornerstones for building a vibrant, inclusive and prosperous community. The opportunities before us are immense and now is the time for bold action.

Over the past months, our Mayor's Arts and Museums Task Force, formed with members of the cultural and creative community, has worked with members of Council and City staff. Through a series of open forums, meaningful discussions and collaborative engagement, we have developed a shared vision and a set of clear priorities to guide Mississauga's cultural future. This process has been shaped by diverse voices and reflects our commitment to inclusivity, creativity and community-driven growth.

Our collective work has resulted in five key priorities: telling stories of the lands and people of Mississauga, improving City systems and processes, building a sustainable creative economy, protecting and creating cultural spaces, and elevating Mississauga as a significant cultural and tourism destination. These priorities will serve as the foundation for our ongoing efforts to build a city where culture and creativity are not only valued, but increasingly supported and celebrated.

The Task Force Report presents 30 actionable recommendations across these priorities. We are already moving forward—integrating these actions into City initiatives, streamlining processes and investing in partnerships that nurture innovation and resilience. Immediate steps include increasing support for local arts and culture organizations, unlocking new spaces for creative activity and aligning funding to sustain and grow the sector. Together, we are strengthening the connections that make Mississauga's creative ecosystem so dynamic.

This work cannot be accomplished by any one group alone. It requires partnerships and collaboration across all sectors—government, artists, cultural leaders, businesses and residents. We are calling on other levels of government and partners to join us in this effort, bringing their expertise, resources and ideas to the table. Mississauga's future depends on our ability to work together, break down barriers and build lasting relationships that support our shared vision.



Our goal is clear: to make Mississauga a city where everyone—families, youth, seniors, newcomers and creatives—can thrive and contribute to a rich cultural life. We are committed to sustainable, inclusive growth that honours our past, celebrates our present and inspires our future. With your support, Mississauga will be a place where creativity flourishes and opportunity is accessible to all.

Let us move forward together with purpose to shape Mississauga's next chapter. Through focused action and strong collaboration, we will deliver a city that is vibrant, inclusive and welcoming for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carolyn Parrish". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Carolyn Parrish, Mayor of Mississauga

Executive Summary

In December 2025, Mayor Carolyn Parrish gathered 11 members of Mississauga's cultural and creative community for an open forum with City Council and staff, led by Councillor Stephen Dasko and supported by Deputy Mayor John Kovac and Councillor Chris Fonseca.

The goal was to bring together sector leaders and City staff to share insights and shape a more coordinated approach to strengthening Mississauga's cultural ecosystem, clarifying how the City, local arts, culture and heritage organizations and cultural and creative sector professionals can work together.

The Task Force included representatives from local cultural groups and creative industries, including visual arts, heritage, music, circus and performing arts, as well as City staff representing Economic Development, Tourism, Strategic Communications and Initiatives, Community & Neighbourhood Development, City-wide Programs and Culture Planning.

Over five months, the Task Force outlined their challenges and goals for Mississauga's cultural and creative sector, including:

- Greater access to cultural spaces
- Better opportunities for local artists and groups
- More cultural and creative events and programs
- Simpler processes for creative activations
- Collaborative marketing partnerships with the City
- Enhanced engagement, networking and information sharing

This Report

1

Combines Task Force recommendations with key City projects into clear priorities and actions.

2

Highlights the City's immediate actions and identifies areas requiring external support.

3

Identifies governance mechanisms to build an interconnected network and enable partnership.

Task Force Recommendations:

Advancing Mississauga's Cultural and Creative Sector

The Task Force is recommending five priorities and 30 actions to advance Mississauga's cultural and creative sector:



Tell Stories of the Lands and People of Mississauga

Mississauga's artists tell the city's story but face challenges growing their audiences and identity.

3 actions strive to boost storytelling, improve promotion and highlight Mississauga's identity.



Optimize City Systems & Processes

City systems can impede cultural activities, partnerships and revenue.

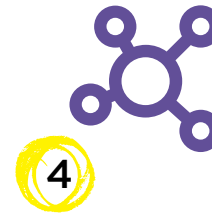
5 actions are designed to streamline city policies and processes, reduce barriers and enhance access for creative work.



Build a Sustainable Creative Economy

The cultural and creative sector faces unstable jobs, limited support and unclear career paths.

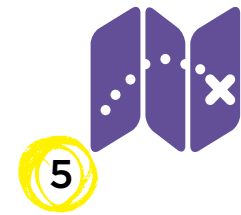
5 actions seek to strengthen creative economies and offer a clear talent pipeline.



Protect & Create Cultural Spaces

Affordable, suitable and stable cultural spaces remain a major barrier to growth and sustainability in Mississauga.

10 actions aim to protect and expand a network of cultural spaces.



Elevate Mississauga as a Significant Cultural and Tourism Destination

Mississauga is ready to position itself as a premier cultural and tourism destination.

7 actions will focus investment on major destinations, infrastructure, public art and partnerships to elevate local talent, attract visitors and strengthen the creative economy.

Five Priorities and 30 Actions

Priority 1. Tell stories of the lands and people of Mississauga

1. Shift the mandate to tell Mississauga's story through community-led arts and creativity.
2. Become a centre for Indigenous culture, history and contemporary expression.
3. Redefine heritage as a living, city-building asset that supports storytelling, placemaking and economic opportunity.

Priority 2. Optimize City Systems & Processes

1. Create flexible lease provisions for City-owned cultural spaces.
2. Remove operational barriers and reduce costs for low-risk cultural activities in City-supported cultural spaces.
3. Put Mississauga's arts and culture in front of people through a new or enhanced city-wide festival and event calendar.
4. Adopt a tiered, outcomes-based cultural funding model aligned to sector needs.
5. Host more outdoor events and create tools, processes and standards to enable communities.

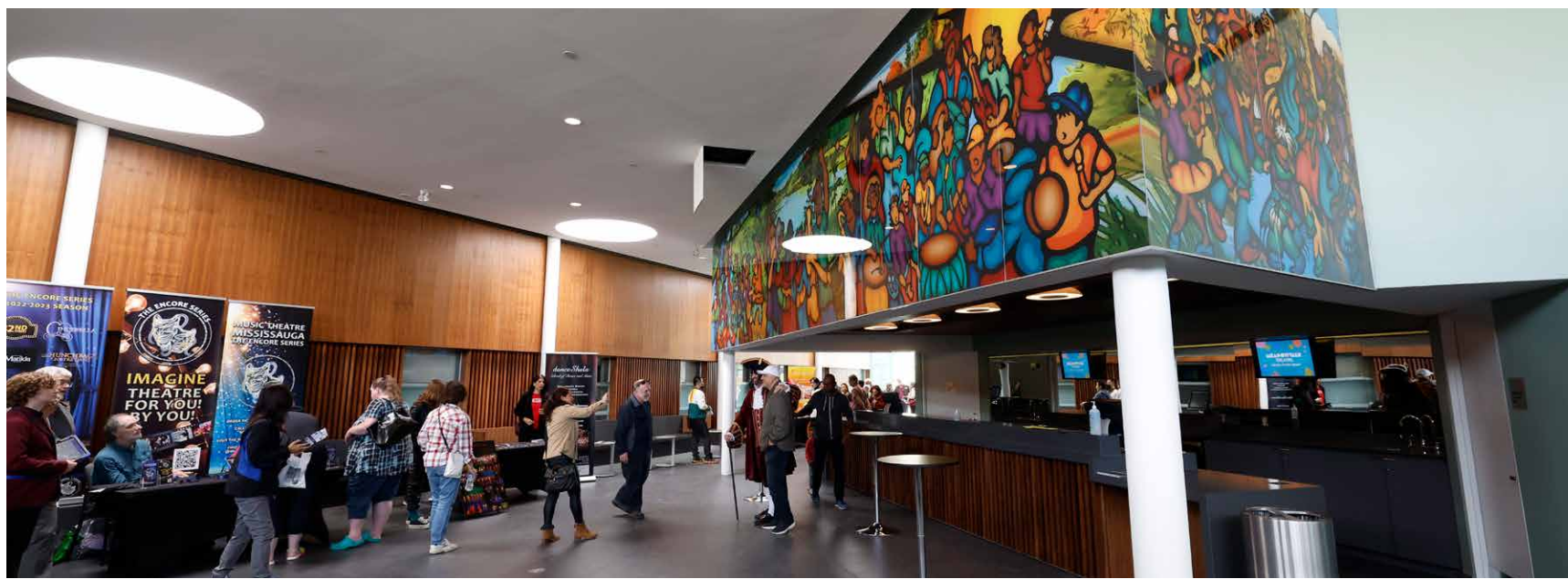
Priority 3. Build a Sustainable Creative Economy

1. Make Mississauga based creative talent the default choice for City-led activity and programming in City spaces.

2. Make it easier and expected to hire local creatives by connecting people to Mississauga cultural talent, vendors and service providers.
3. Grow what works—expand support for high-impact creative sectors.
4. Build careers—not just programs—for creative talent.
5. Build a long-term investment strategy for the cultural and creative sector.

Priority 4. Protect & Create Cultural Spaces

1. Protect existing cultural infrastructure and creative spaces through a Cultural Space Provision and Utilization Program.
2. Commit to a no net loss standard for public and private cultural spaces.
3. Embed a Percent for Public Art policy across all major capital projects.
4. Make cultural spaces easy to find, understand and use across the city.
5. Pilot a strategy to increase affordable access to cultural spaces.
6. Unlock underused and unconventional spaces for local production and presentation.
7. Activate vacant and underused commercial spaces through a meanwhile use program.



It Takes a Community to Build a Story, Jay Havens, Meadowvale Theatre (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

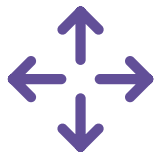
8. Bring new life to underused heritage buildings through cultural use.
9. Advance the Peel Art Gallery, Museums and Archives (PAMA) transition to build a connected network of local cultural and heritage spaces.
10. Equip parks and public spaces for year-round cultural animation.

Priority 5: Elevate Mississauga as a Significant Cultural and Tourism Destination

1. Advance Mississauga as a leading Music City by leveraging strengths and supporting purpose-built venues.
2. Establish Mississauga as a global leader in public art.
3. Elevate Small Arms Inspection Building (SAIB) as a vibrant waterfront hub for artists, production and innovation.
4. Develop the Arsenal Lands into a dynamic waterfront centre for culture, learning and community.
5. Activate Lakeview Village's cultural blocks and pier as a vibrant waterfront destination.
6. Advance exceptional destination-scale facilities through the Living Arts Centre (LAC) and Downtown Core lands redevelopment and other major capital projects.
7. Establish a destination-scale exhibition presence that integrates local gallery expertise with major institutional partnerships across the city.

We're Starting Now: *Mississauga is Acting*

The Task Force's priorities and recommendations will help guide Mississauga's next phase of cultural growth, shaping a more connected and distinctly local ecosystem, reducing barriers and aligning culture with economic development, tourism and broader city-building efforts. This work is already underway.



Supporting Community Vibrancy and Creativity in Neighbourhoods

1. Creating a one-window single intake process for creative ideas
2. Expanding Cultural Districts and emerging creative clusters



Creating a Supportive Environment for Artists to Grow and Succeed

1. Updating the Noise By-Law to enable increased music activity
2. Refreshing the Culture Policy to tackle current challenges



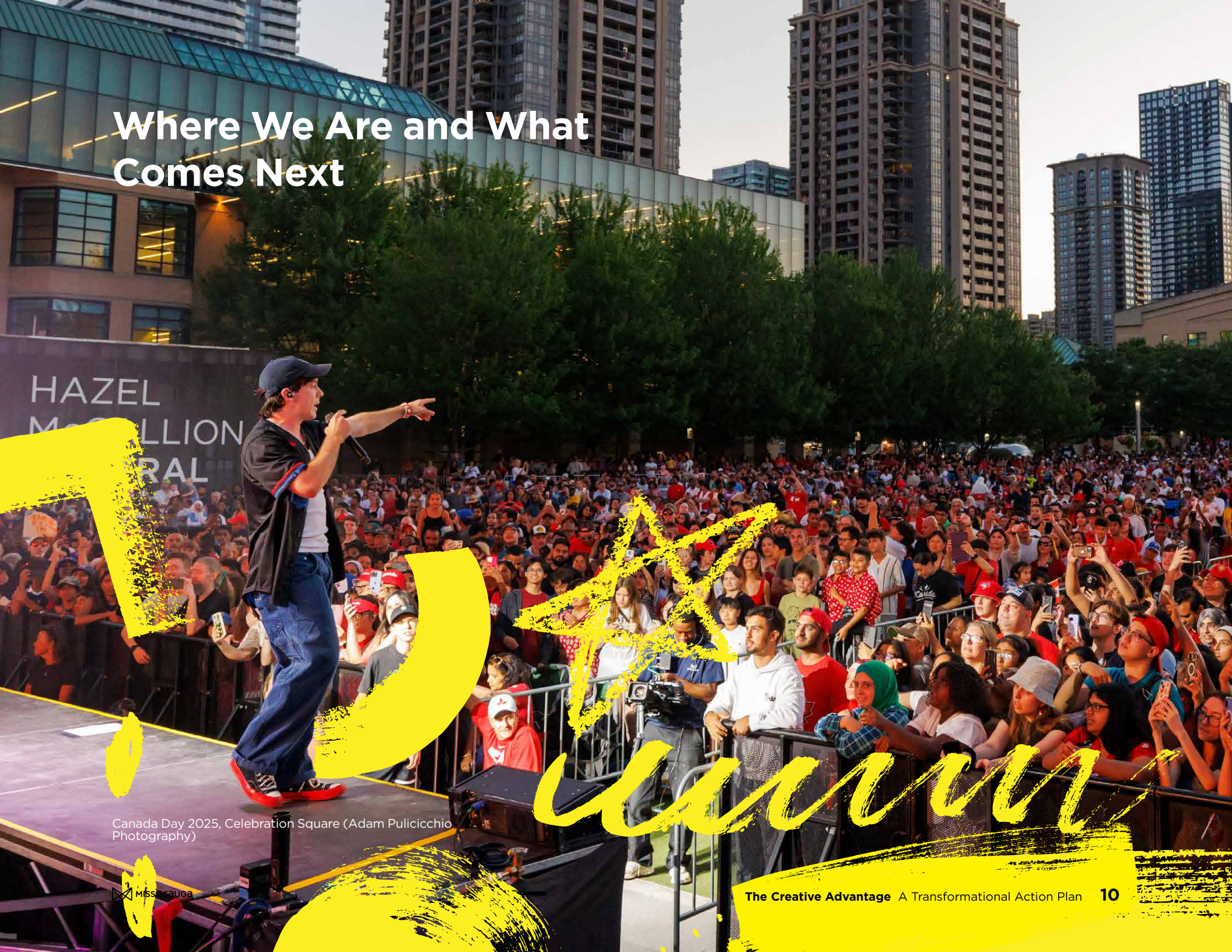
Strengthening and Expanding Cultural Spaces

1. Building a city-wide network of functional and accessible cultural spaces
2. Creating art hubs in community centres
3. Identifying and advancing cultural and tourism investments to build destinations



GYLES, Summer Concert Series, Port Credit Memorial Park (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

Where We Are and What Comes Next



HAZEL
MILLION
RAL

Canada Day 2025, Celebration Square (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

Culture and creativity shape how a city understands itself and imagines its future; they connect people, express identity and turn everyday life into shared meaning.

In Mississauga, culture is woven into daily life through language, traditions and creative expression that foster belonging and shape a shared sense of identity. As histories are carried forward and new voices emerge, creativity fuels this evolution and helps communities adapt, imagine new possibilities and build a more inclusive future.

This collective energy is sustained by a network of community groups, cultural organizations, institutions and creative businesses, each contributing to a connected cultural ecosystem. Together, they support a vibrant local economy, attract talent and investment and enhance Mississauga's appeal. Connecting neighbourhood spaces, programs, events and creative enterprises, this ecosystem fosters participation and expression, shaping a city where people feel rooted and inspired.

Realizing this potential, however, requires a coordinated and intentional system of support than currently exists in Mississauga.



Jungle Book, Kidoons, WYRD, The 20K Collective, Living Arts Centre
(Adam Pulicicchio Photography)

A system built over time, not by design.

Mississauga's current approach to arts, culture and heritage has evolved over time rather than being designed as a coordinated system. Since the dissolution of the City's Culture Division in 2023, responsibility and connection points for culture have been spread across multiple teams.

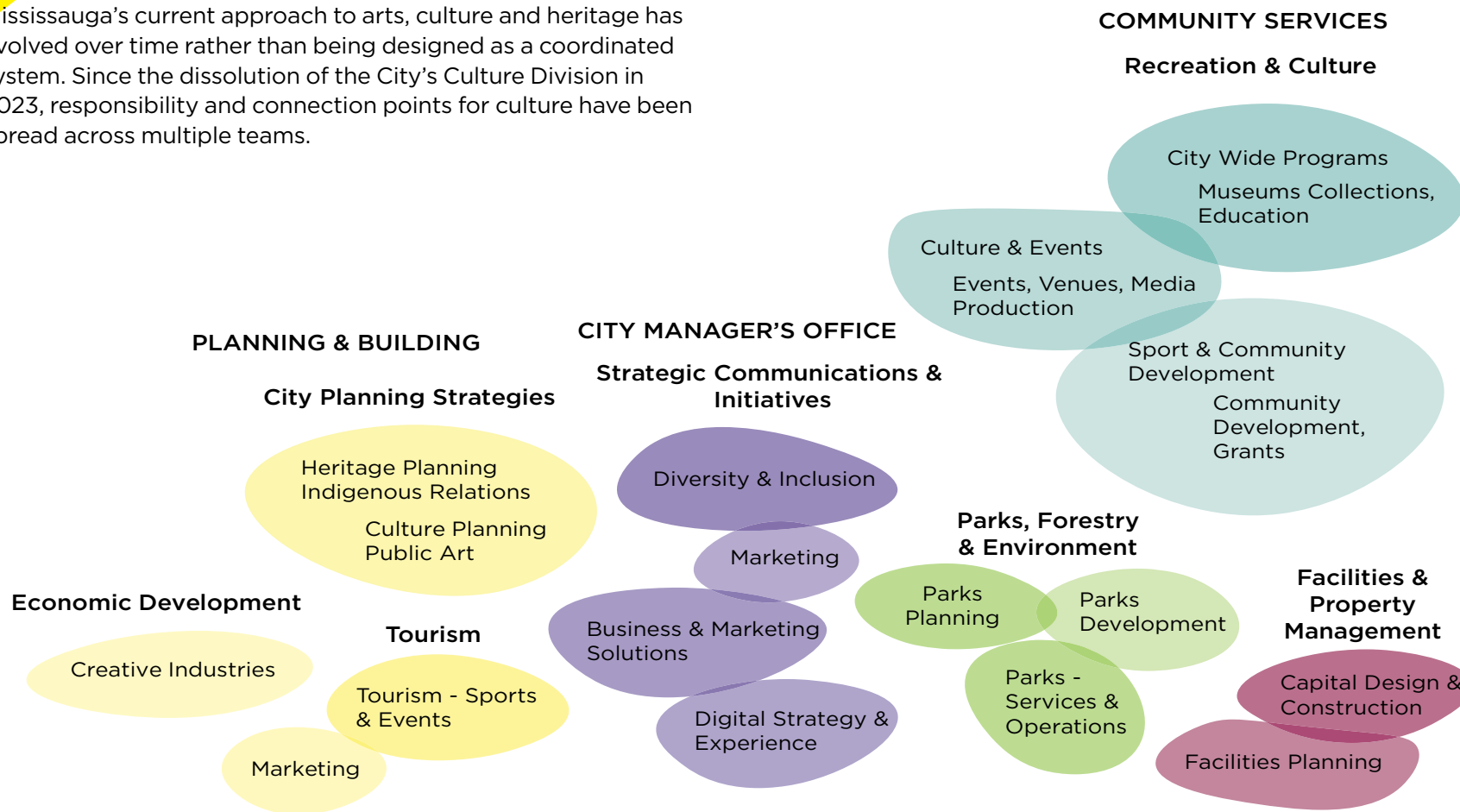


Figure 1. Visual representation of Departments and Divisions within the City of Mississauga that support with culture service delivery.

The City has prioritized community programming and sector development through various groups including not-for-profits, for-profit businesses and individual artists. Less emphasis has been placed on targeted growth of the cultural and creative sector, partnerships, cultural infrastructure and creative spaces. While each area plays an important role, this structure has resulted in fragmented support for the cultural and creative sector, limited coordination and no single point of accountability.

As a result, the City lacks a clear framework for how different parts of the cultural ecosystem are supported and developed, including community arts, heritage and culture, civic cultural affiliates and professional cultural and creative sector activity. This makes it difficult to align funding, infrastructure and service delivery and limits the City's ability to advance key cultural ambitions.

What we heard

In December 2025, Mayor Carolyn Parrish gathered 11 members of Mississauga's cultural and creative community for an open forum with City Council and staff. This Task Force was led by Councillor Stephen Dasko and supported by Deputy Mayor John Kovac and Councillor Chris Fonseca. The Task Force members included representatives from local cultural groups and creative industries, including visual arts, heritage, music, circus and performing arts. City staff were also in attendance to listen to concerns and challenges raised by members, as well as present on current work and mandates. The ultimate outcome from this Task Force is to transform Mississauga into a vibrant cultural city with strong support systems and enhanced visibility for its cultural and creative sector.

Over a series of five meetings, members discussed various aspects of their work and role within Mississauga's cultural system. Each member was tasked with outlining their current challenges and how the City could better support their

mandates. They also outlined opportunities for closer collaboration, enhanced partnerships and developing a robust, inclusive and sustainable arts and culture system in Mississauga.

Task Force Discussion Highlights:

- Stronger cross-promotion and partnerships with local cultural organizations and industries
- Promotion of local artists and creatives
- Improved event promotion and the establishment of a central calendar of events
- Integration of cultural services into tourism strategies and more direct municipal support for local arts groups
- Recognition of the arts' role in driving tourism, sustainability and cross-sector collaboration

The Task Force also noted that the move away from centralized coordination in the former Culture Division made it harder for partners to navigate and collaborate with the City. It also contributed to a lack of clarity in how different parts of the cultural ecosystem are supported and grown—from community participation to professional cultural and creative activity.



Museums Education Program (Adam Pulicchio Photography)

Existing strength and opportunity

Culture and creativity are central to city-building outcomes. Mississauga has an active, engaged and productive cultural and creative sector made up of a wide range of cultural workers and creatives working across various disciplines. Culture drives Mississauga's tourism, economy and community, enriching daily life.

Statistics Canada reported that Canada's culture GDP rose 5.2%

to \$63.2 billion in 2023, outpacing the overall economy's 2.7% growth. Ontario contributed \$32 billion—almost half of the total—with Craft, Film and Video and Interactive Media as top cultural exports.¹

¹ Provincial and Territorial Cultural Indicators, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/250602/dq250602a-eng.htm>

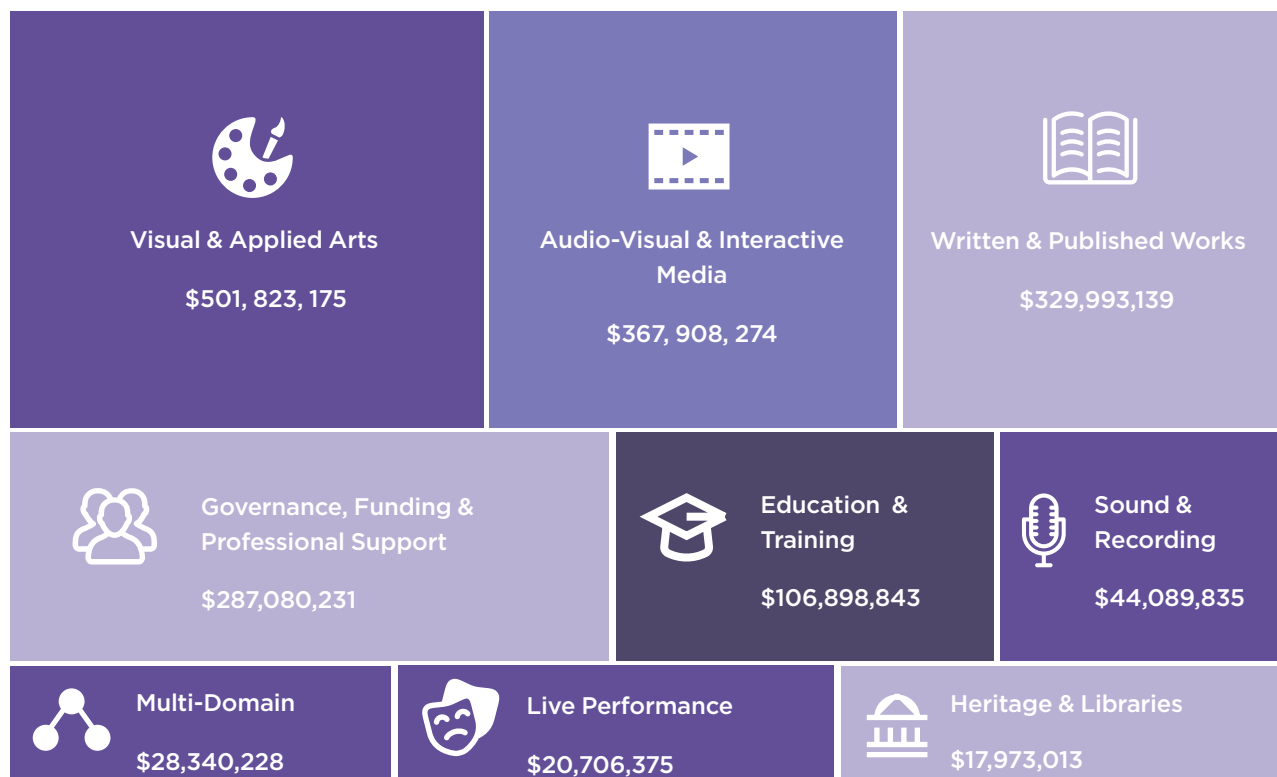


Figure 2. Mississauga's Cultural Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by Domain, 2023.

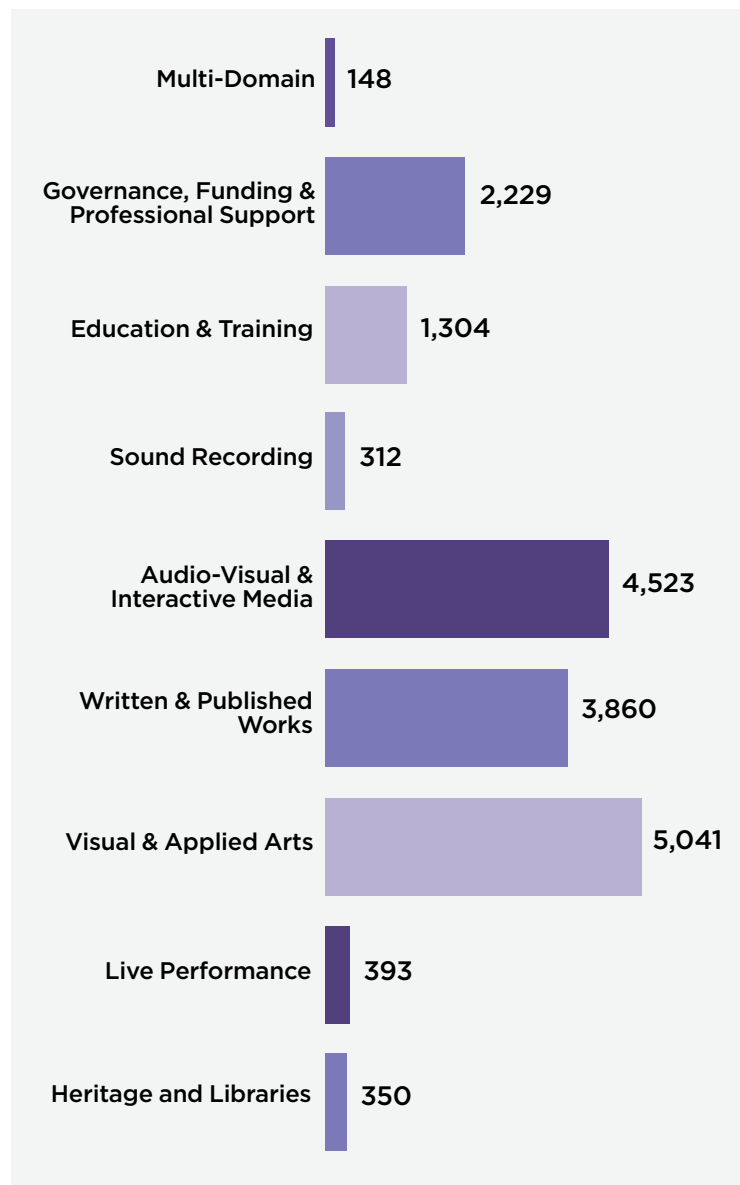


Figure 3. Mississauga's Culture Sector Jobs, 2023.

Mississauga's primary cultural industry is Visual and Applied Arts, made up of crafts, design, photography, original visual arts, architecture and advertising. In 2023, the Visual and Applied Arts industry generates more than \$500 million in GDP and over 5,000 jobs. The Audio-Visual and Interactive Media sector, which includes film and video, broadcasting and interactive media, added an additional \$360 million in GDP and 4,500 jobs.

In addition to economic contributions, studies report that 79% of Ontarians view the arts as important for mental health and quality of life. Without focused efforts, these benefits may fade as the city grows and shifts investments elsewhere.

Participation in cultural activities is high, facilities are well-used and festivals, events, public art and programming animate spaces across the city. In 2025, more than 1.5 million people attended City-funded cultural events and activities, with over one million attendees at City venues. Registered cultural programs continue to see strong demand, with more than 22,000 participants and growing waitlists, reflecting sustained and unmet interest across the city.

Support for artists has expanded, with more visual artists in the Living Arts Centre Resident Artist Program and new opportunities for local musicians through the Music Office.



Family Day Downtown 2026, Living Arts Centre
(Adam Pulicichio Photography)

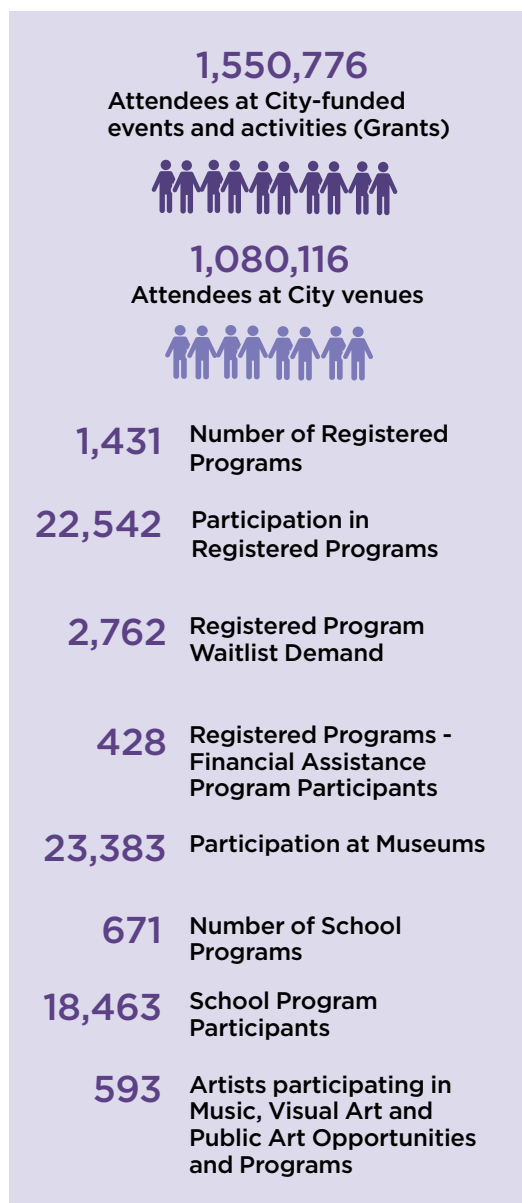


Figure 4. Culture Participation, 2025.



Figure 5. Culture Venue usage rates, 2025.

**includes total hours used by Programs, as well as averaged hours per visit, per studio by Resident Artists*

Public Art now offers more mentorships and opportunities for emerging artists. Cultural venues remain overprescribed, as limited days and weekends mean high demand for space. This results in overlapping activities or missed event opportunities due to space constraints.

A system under growing pressure

At the same time, Mississauga's active, engaged and vibrant cultural system of people, organizations and space is under increasing pressure. Economic, social and environmental changes are affecting how people live and work. Recent Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) surveys (2023-2025) show that only 17% of cultural workers have optimism about the economy², amid rising living costs, changing consumer patterns and regulatory challenges. Cultural and creative sector organizations continue to struggle with resource shortages and uncertain revenue since the pandemic, making long-term planning difficult.

The cultural and creative sector boosts Ontario's economy and community well-being but faces ongoing challenges. Addressing these is crucial for its future. These broader pressures are being felt locally in Mississauga, where they are intensified by competition for limited municipal resources.

In comparison to similar municipalities such as Vancouver, Ottawa, Hamilton and Brampton, Mississauga is behind on culture funding and grants spending. The City's per capita investment is the lowest among these comparator municipalities. As a larger municipality, sitting within Canada's largest metropolitan area, the cultural ecosystem in Mississauga is currently under-developed. And this is reflected in the funding structures for culture.

2 2025 Ontario Economic Report, pg.9 <https://occ.ca/interactive-oer2025>

Mississauga has one of the lowest per capita spending on culture among Canadian cities

Municipality	2023
Mississauga	\$11.72
Brampton	\$13.27
Hamilton	\$26.20
Ottawa	\$73.34
Vancouver	\$166.93

Figure 6: Table showing Mississauga's overall per capita funding level in 2023, the lowest amongst comparable Canadian municipalities.

The OCC surveys (2023-2025) highlighted the need to reduce barriers and strengthen the conditions for the cultural and creative sector to grow by simplifying regulations, supporting local tourism, investing in infrastructure and addressing housing and workforce challenges³. It also calls for more coordinated funding, improved access to cultural spaces and markets, and targeted support for skills development, equity and small businesses to build a more resilient and competitive sector.

This combination of strong demand, limited resources and fragmented delivery highlights the gap between the strength of Mississauga's cultural and creative sector and the systems in place to support it.

3 2025 Ontario Economic Report, pg.49 <https://occ.ca/interactive-oer2025>



A moment of opportunity

Mississauga has reached a defining moment in its history; a period of transition and opportunity. The city is coming into its own, evolving from a suburb into a vibrant urban centre that reflects the energy and identity of the people who are connected to these lands and call it home. Population growth, major infrastructure investments and increased autonomy in planning and delivery are creating new conditions for how culture can function in the city.

There is strong recognition and support for the social, cultural and economic impacts of culture within existing and emerging City strategies and studies, including:

Imagine Mississauga 2026 Strategic Plan sets a city-wide direction focused on belonging, connectivity, prosperity, sustainability and trust positioning culture as a key contributor by supporting inclusive services and vibrant spaces, strengthening connectivity across communities, attracting investment and talent, nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship and advancing Mississauga as a cultural and creative hub.



Partners in Homebuilding: Mayor's Housing Task Force Report focuses on improving housing affordability by streamlining development charges, regulations and zoning, which also supports the cultural sector by enabling more affordable living and working spaces for artists and creative workers.

The evolution of City-owned properties such as the Arsenal Lands in Lakeview and the Living Arts Centre (LAC) presents a Big Moves opportunity to leverage these assets through partnerships, supporting specialized spaces that strengthen the cultural ecosystem. At the same time, the transition of the Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA) to the City of Brampton creates an opportunity to reinvest approximately \$3.5 million per year in local culture and creativity, while maintaining collaboration across the regional heritage and museum sector through the Transition Board.

Path to Prosperity 2030 outlines a city-building approach to economic development that supports business growth and workforce development, while directly advancing the cultural and creative sector through creative industry growth, skills development and entrepreneurship.

Empowering Change: A Comprehensive Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy addresses systemic barriers across City policies and services, helping ensure more equitable access to opportunities, funding and participation for diverse communities, including creative talent and cultural organizations.

Mississauga Retail Strategy emphasizes preserving and adapting retail and commercial spaces to remain flexible and accessible, supporting local businesses and providing critical storefront, studio and pop-up spaces for cultural activity, exhibition, experimentation and creative enterprise.

Why this matters

The City's major ambitions, including being a Music City, destination cultural infrastructure, institutional partnerships, waterfront cultural districts, stronger museums and Indigenous cultural space, cannot be advanced effectively under the current arrangement.

Recent City-led work reinforces the need to view culture as an ecosystem. Internal studies highlight challenges such as access, affordability, capacity and coordination, while identifying opportunities to better align roles, partnerships and investment across the network.

Centralizing leadership and improving coordination is essential for creating a healthy cultural ecosystem and amplifying its impact for Mississauga. These challenges also reflect a need to better distinguish and connect different roles within the ecosystem:

- Community arts, heritage and culture supports participation, belonging, neighbourhood activation and local identity.
- Civic cultural affiliates sit between community and professional activity and engage in either or both forms of cultural and creative practice.
- Professional cultural and creative sector activity focuses on creation, production, presentation and creative economy growth.

Each plays a distinct and complementary role in building a complete cultural system.



Digable Planets, Living Arts Centre (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

Let's build a thriving cultural ecosystem for Mississauga

What is needed now is a shift—from incremental, siloed, program-by-program responses to a cultural ecosystem model with a clear set of shared priorities that focus on delivery through partnership, meaningful outcomes and benefits that are shared equitably across the city. The conversation is not whether culture and creativity matter; it's how can we better enable its broader impacts and shape Mississauga's future as a city.

Mississauga's cultural sector is an interconnected network of artists, organizations, businesses, spaces, funders and audiences. While these connections are a strength, the system feels fragmented and hard to navigate. A cultural ecosystem approach brings greater alignment—connecting people, spaces, funding and services to make support clearer and easier to access.

This shift also supports the delivery of broader City priorities already identified in strategies related to economic development, housing, tourism, equity and infrastructure. A more coordinated ecosystem approach ensures these priorities are implemented in a way that fully enables culture and creativity to contribute to Mississauga's long-term growth.

An ecosystem is not a single program—it is a shared way of working. It clarifies responsibilities and strengthens connections and collaboration over isolation, with partners working together to meet community needs. As a result, residents benefit from more diverse and accessible cultural opportunities, while artists and organizations gain clearer pathways, stronger partnerships and better support—helping culture grow and thrive across the city.

In Mississauga:

- The City leads and enables the system by setting direction, coordinating partners, delivering inclusive and accessible programming and creating the conditions for a thriving cultural ecosystem.
- Professional cultural and creative sector organizations produce and grow the sector by creating and presenting work, building audiences and driving quality and sustainability.
- Community arts, heritage and cultural organizations expand access and participation by delivering inclusive programming and strengthening local engagement.
- Civic cultural affiliates connect community and professional practice by delivering participatory programming, strengthening belonging and access and supporting talent development and cultural partnerships.
- Partners—including Artists and cultural workers create and innovate by generating the content, talent, events and ideas that fuel the ecosystem.
- The private sector, education and other governments—support the system by investing in space, skills, policy and funding.
- Residents and audiences participate in and sustain the ecosystem by engaging with and supporting cultural life across the city.

The City will explore opportunities to strengthen and align its cultural services from across the organization—enhancing leadership, coordination and accountability to better serve the cultural and creative sector.

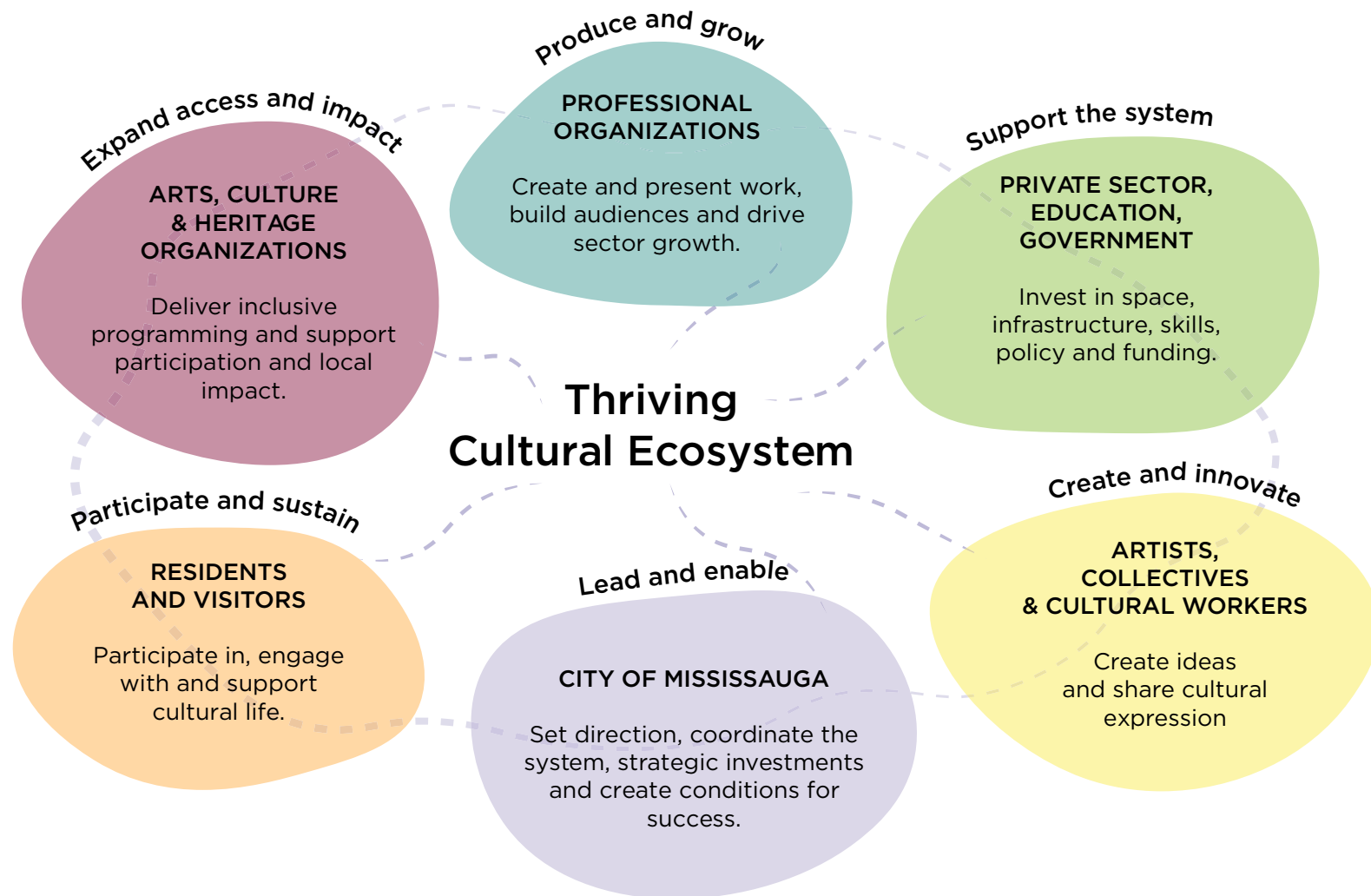


Figure 7. Network diagram showing the roles of partners across Mississauga's Cultural Ecosystem.



Mississauga already has several examples of cultural ecosystems in action:

- **Mississauga Arts Council's Sauga Arts Hub improves visibility, coordination and audience access through a shared tool:** A centralized digital platform that connects hundreds of local events, artists and organizations and improves visibility and access across the sector.
- **CreativeHub 1352 (operating in the Small Arms Inspection Building, Lakeview Cultural District) brings together partners and place-based investment to create a vibrant local cultural node:** An emerging cultural hub that supports the development of a cultural hub in Lakeview by bringing together artists, studios, programming and community activity in one space.
- **Celebration Square events and festivals integrate culture, public space and economic activity:** Large-scale, City-supported programming that reduces risk for sector partners, creating a platform for festivals, performances, tourism and local business activity.
- **Tourism Mississauga partnerships link culture directly to economic development:** Collaboration between cultural organizations and tourism (e.g., festivals, performances and major events) to attract visitors and grow the local economy.
- **Film and music production sector (e.g. Metalworks, film studios):** A growing creative industry cluster that connects local talent to global markets—showing how the cultural ecosystem includes both not-for-profit arts and commercial creative industries.
- **Community-based programming (e.g. Visual Arts Mississauga, Heritage Mississauga, Frog in Hand) embeds**



culture in everyday community life: Organizations delivering classes, exhibitions and site-specific performances in neighbourhoods.

- **Art Gallery of Mississauga provides accessible, inclusive cultural engagement for all:** Free exhibitions, public programs and educational experiences that connect diverse communities with contemporary art and ideas.
- **Local theatre groups share cultural experiences, storytelling and build creative careers:** Producing live performances that bring people together, grow audiences, and support artists' professional development.

Many of the foundations for a vibrant cultural ecosystem are already in place. By strengthening connections and working more intentionally together, Mississauga can fully integrate culture into the life of the city—shaping how it grows, connects, and thrives.



Canada Day 2025, Celebration Square (Adam Pulicicchio Photography)

Task Force Recommendations: Solutions We Can Deliver Together



Tell stories of the lands and people of Mississauga

Mississauga is a vibrant, diverse and creative city shaped by arts, culture and heritage. Artists, cultural organizations and creative professionals bring the city's story to life every day through forums like performances, programs, writing and community gatherings. As people connect and share their experiences, culture and perspectives, a distinct cultural identity is emerging. One shaped not only by the diversity of people who live here, but by the exchange of ideas, values and traditions that foster belonging, creativity and inclusion. Yet, many of these stories, voices, places and ideas remain disconnected, invisible or underrepresented across the city.

Task Force members identified gaps in coordination, promotion and storytelling that limit awareness and the ability to build a shared civic narrative. Addressing these challenges requires a more coordinated and intentional approach to how culture is experienced, shared and celebrated across Mississauga through greater visibility, partnerships, shared storytelling and audience engagement. This work includes balancing city-wide destination storytelling with the grassroots creative activity, cultural practices and neighbourhood experiences that shape everyday life in Mississauga. It also signals a shift in the City's role from primarily promoting its own initiatives to building meaningful relationships with cultural and creative communities and supporting them as ambassadors of Mississauga's evolving identity.

This work must reflect the full breadth of Mississauga's identity by elevating its diverse communities' voices, places and ideas. The City of Mississauga is committed to advancing Reconciliation and embedding anti-racism, equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility throughout its cultural ecosystem and city-building efforts. This means creating space for Indigenous knowledge, cultures and perspectives; valuing lived experiences

The following priorities and actions set out a coordinated approach to strengthening Mississauga's cultural ecosystem through collaboration among the City, community arts, heritage and culture, civic cultural affiliates, professional cultural and creative sector organizations and other partners. They reflect a shared direction for supporting culture as a vital part of civic life, belonging, cultural vitality and economic growth that builds on the 2024 Culture Plan, internal studies and related City strategies, Task Force insights and broader engagement.

Together, five priorities and 30 actions focus on removing barriers and supporting the conditions for artists, organizations and creative businesses to thrive. They re-establish a clear leadership role for the City and align cultural work with broader city-building priorities, including economic development, tourism, infrastructure and community well-being.

This work is supported by a set of "Big Moves" that translate the cultural ecosystem approach into coordinated, practical steps to strengthen cultural spaces and service delivery across Mississauga. Together, they establish a clear path for phased implementation, pending Council approval, and ongoing collaboration between the City, cultural and creative sector and other partners.

This approach strengthens cultural spaces, partnerships, service delivery and sector development, while supporting storytelling, participation, creative expression and destination-building across the city. It reflects a commitment to a vibrant, equitable and resilient cultural ecosystem that contributes to Mississauga's identity and long-term vitality.

and diverse cultural expressions; and recognizing heritage and history as active and evolving parts of civic life. Together, these efforts will foster a more connected and representative cultural narrative that strengthens belonging, expands participation and positions Mississauga as a vibrant, inclusive and culturally rich city.

1. **Shift the mandate to tell Mississauga's stories through community-led arts and creativity.** Reframe the City's role to amplify local narratives and stories by building direct connections with artists, collectives, cultural organizations and creative professionals as ambassadors of Mississauga's identity. Expand communications and destination marketing to balance major events with small scale cultural and creative activities happening across neighbourhoods every day. By elevating both flagship and everyday experiences, present a more authentic, vibrant narrative of the city and attract diverse new audiences.
2. **Become a centre for Indigenous culture, history and contemporary expression.** Recognize Indigenous presence and leadership as a fundamental element of Mississauga's cultural identity. Ground this work in Truth and Reconciliation by establishing a clear, collaborative approach with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and other Indigenous partners. Prioritize Indigenous-led storytelling, education and public engagement. Continually advance this work through partnerships, potentially anchored by a major cultural institution or initiative focused on shared histories, diversity and reconciliation. Enable Indigenous curatorial leadership, ethical stewardship of cultural materials and sustained programming led by Indigenous voices.

BIG MOVE

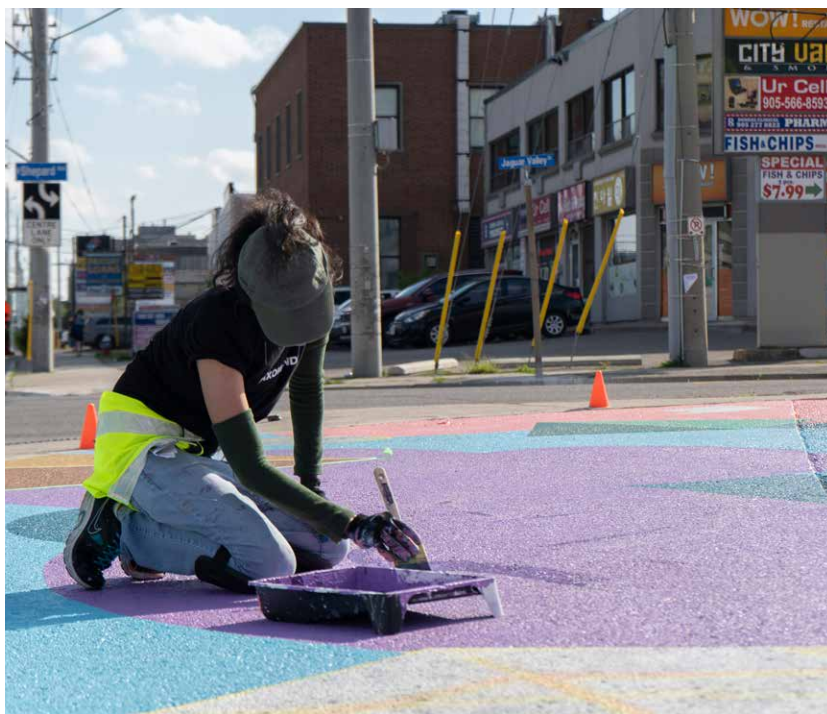
3. **Redefine heritage as a living, city-building asset that supports storytelling, placemaking and economic opportunity.** Shift from a conservation-focused approach to a Heritage Services Strategy that integrates planning, museums, programming and collections and leverages partnerships to advance broader cultural, environmental and economic objectives. Align heritage assets and activities to support identity, education, tourism and community pride, while developing an integrated collections strategy that expands access and advances circular economy outcomes.

Partnerships:

- Indigenous Treaty and inherent rights communities and the urban indigenous community
- Tourism Mississauga
- BIAs and destination organizations
- Media and platform partners
- Cultural and creative sector partners
- Community groups
- Provincial and national level cultural institutions

2 Optimize City Systems & Processes

City systems, policies and processes can be optimized to better support creative work in Mississauga. Task Force members shared that current systems often create barriers for artists, organizations and cultural producers, who struggle to find information and navigate permits, zoning, leases, insurance requirements, funding streams and promotional opportunities. These barriers limit temporary and short-term use of public and private spaces, such as exhibitions, pop-ups, cafés and residencies, while also constraining programming flexibility, reducing visibility and participation and hindering opportunities for revenue generation.



Cooksville Mural, Andre Kan, Jaguar Valley and Dundas Street (Kyle Jarencio Photography)

Across Canada, cities are shifting from primarily regulatory and landlord roles toward more active support of cultural and creative economies. Mississauga can build on this shift by embedding a cultural lens across its policies, processes and communications platforms to improve access, unlock underused spaces and enable a broader range of cultural activity.

Key opportunities include optimizing leases for City-owned cultural spaces, aligning requirements with risk, improving promotion through a city-wide events and festival calendar, adopting a more equitable, outcomes-based funding model, expanding outdoor events and simplifying processes. These actions will reduce barriers, better support artists and organizations and help Mississauga's artists, organizations and creative businesses grow and thrive.

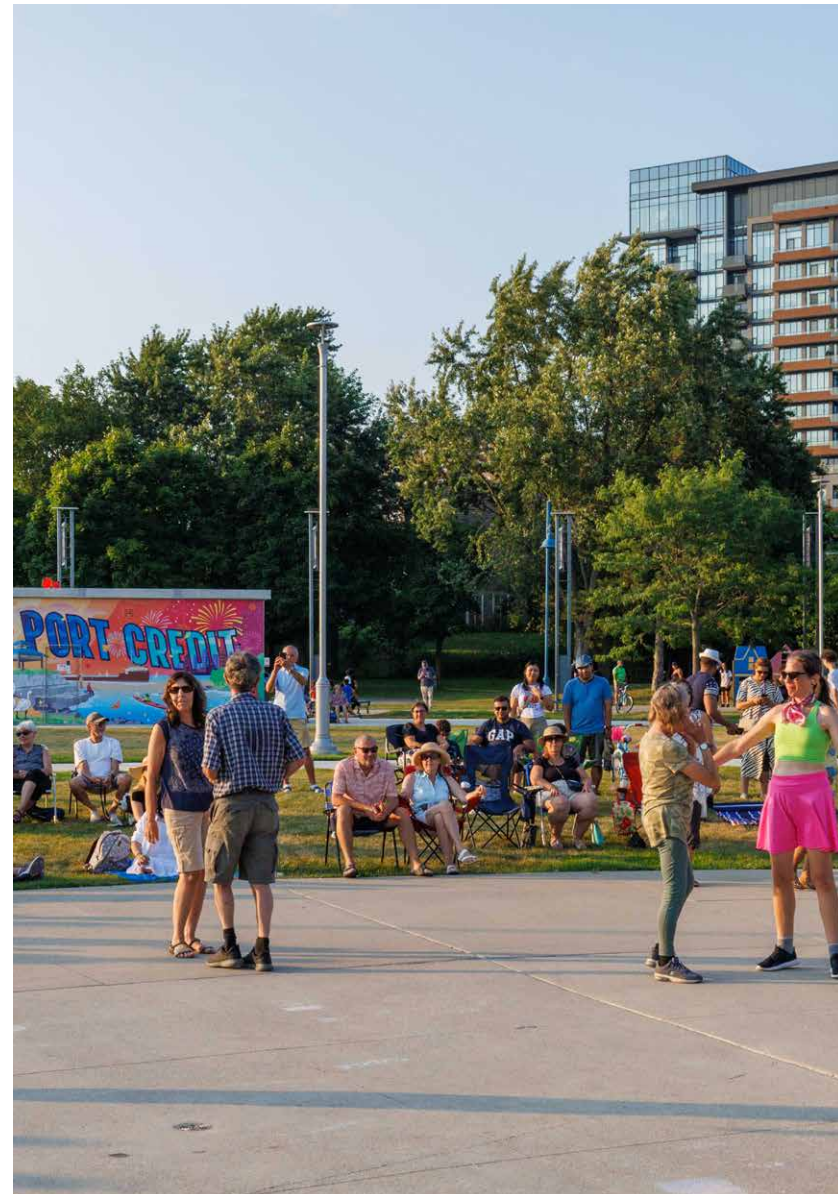
1. **Create flexible lease provisions for City-owned cultural spaces.** Expand permitted uses and extend leases on City-owned cultural spaces to support diverse programming, partnerships and revenue generation, fostering financial sustainability for community cultural groups.
2. **Remove operational barriers and reduce costs for low-risk cultural activities in City-supported cultural spaces.** Align insurance and security requirements for cultural activities in City-owned venues, such as gallery exhibitions and openings, with assessed risk levels, making access and participation easier.
3. **Put Mississauga's arts and culture in front of people through a new or enhanced city-wide festival and event calendar.** Leverage City platforms to promote community cultural events and organizations, helping residents and visitors engage with Mississauga's cultural scene. Establish a clear process for community groups and creative partners to use City communications, advertising assets and share

activities through a new or enhanced city-wide festival and event calendar.

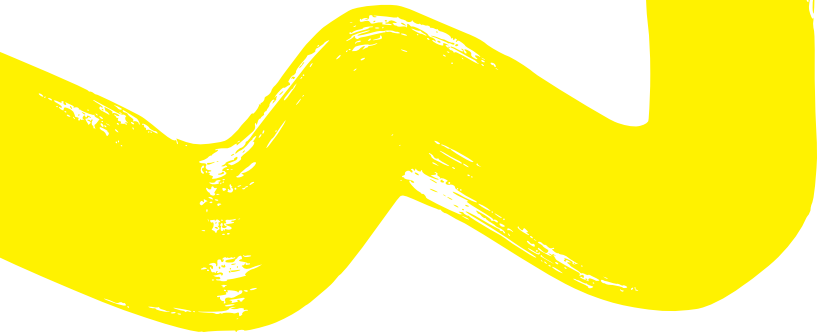
4. **Adopt a tiered, outcomes-based cultural funding model aligned to sector needs.** Shift from fragmented project funding toward a more transparent and equitable model that reflects career stage, discipline-specific needs and project scope. Expand access to two- to three-year funding agreements for more organizations to support stability and planning. Align key performance indicators with the cultural and creative sector to enable consistent data sharing and evaluation. Increase the City's overall grants budget to allocate direct funding for individual artists, creatives and cultural industries, with a focus on creation and production, subject to the budget process and return of the PAMA levy to the City.
5. **Host more outdoor events and create tools, processes and standards to enable communities.** Connect with residents, cultural organizations, event hosts and producers to explore ways to reduce barriers for programs, events and festivals across the city.

Partnerships:

- Sector intermediaries (to co design standards)
- Legal & insurance partners
- Venue operators and promoters
- Third party booking or management entities
- Cultural institutions



PRIMO (Christian Alexis Osorio), Summer Concert Series, Port Credit Memorial Park (Adam Pulicicchio Photography)



3 Build a Sustainable Creative Economy

Mississauga needs to support creative talent to foster sustainable careers and scale businesses. The city's cultural sector is active and expanding but faces challenges like limited pathways for career growth—especially for mid-career professionals and organizations transitioning from emerging to established. Funding and support systems are fragmented and can be unpredictable and inconsistent. Rising costs and income instability make it difficult for artists to earn stable, living wages, access predictable paid opportunities and build long term careers, leading to creative talent leaving the city and restricted growth.

These issues mirror a wider Canadian trend: despite being a major economic driver, the cultural and creative sector suffers from insecure work, scattered supports and weak career pathways. Cities across Canada are addressing this by investing more strategically in entrepreneurship and linking culture to economic outcomes.

Change is needed: Mississauga should adopt a coordinated strategy for creative economic development by aligning and providing predictable, consistent supports and investing in talent and entrepreneurship with a focus on underrepresented disciplines. This will create a clear talent pipeline, enable local creative businesses to scale and succeed and position the city as a vibrant creative economy that attracts investment and retains talent.

- 1. Make Mississauga-based creative talent the default choice for City-led activity and programming in City spaces.** City venues, events and cultural programs should prioritize local creative professionals and service providers in procurement and contracts in alignment with Ontario's "Made in Ontario" approach. This will strengthen career opportunities, keep economic value in Mississauga and boost growth in the city's creative economy. A balanced approach that includes national and international artists alongside local talent can elevate local practice, support mentorship and collaboration, reflect diverse audiences and strengthen cultural, economic and tourism outcomes.
- 2. Make it easier and expected to hire local creatives by connecting people to Mississauga cultural talent, vendors and service providers.** Leverage the Mississauga Arts Council's open-source directory to streamline access to local creative talent, vendors and cultural service providers for City staff, partners and funders and embed requirements in event contracts at City-owned venues to prioritize hiring from this local ecosystem.
- 3. Grow what works—expand support for high-impact creative sectors.** Build on Mississauga's existing strengths by formally expanding the City's portfolio of professional supports and services to include high-impact cultural and creative disciplines. This involves offering targeted support, funding and sector-specific programs for digital and media arts, performing arts, heritage and literary arts to close gaps and boost economic outcomes.
- 4. Build careers—not just programs—for creative talent.** Empower sector partners to create a cultural incubator strategy that helps artists and creative professionals develop skills, connections and career opportunities in Mississauga's creative economy.

5. **Build a long-term investment strategy for the cultural and creative sector.** Ensure stable, long-term funding for cultural projects by using the Municipal Accommodation Tax and integrating arts investment into City capital initiatives, so cultural infrastructure and support grow with the city.

Partnerships:

- Planning & Building + sector organizations
- Post secondary institutions
- Industry associations
- Foundations & financial intermediaries



Vishal Shekhar Concert, Mississauga Sports & Entertainment Centre (Adam Pulicichio Photography)



4 Protect & Create Cultural Spaces

Mississauga should build a visible, distributed network of cultural spaces to energize neighbourhoods, strengthen identity, support community life and boost economic development. Task Force members noted that affordable, appropriate and stable cultural spaces are scarce due to rising costs and limited planning, while demand outpaces supply and awareness is low. This issue reflects a broader lack of cultural infrastructure affecting cities across Canada, where limited access to affordable space is constraining the cultural and creative sector. Rapid growth, suburban development patterns and Mississauga's evolving cultural landscape further intensify this pressure.

Without targeted action, the city risks losing important spaces for artists and communities to create, collaborate and connect with one another. A coordinated, system-wide approach is needed. One that recognizes the need for a diverse mix of spaces—from major venues to flexible neighbourhood sites—supporting different disciplines, practices and stages of creative development. Such a strategy would help culture become an everyday part of life throughout Mississauga, ensuring vibrant and inclusive communities for residents and supporting the city's ongoing development.

1. **Protect existing cultural infrastructure and creative spaces through a cultural space provision and utilization program.** Establish a cultural space provision and utilization program that standardizes the supply of cultural spaces. Implement an internal dashboard to track supply, cultural space needs and develop external mapping integrated into the City's existing open data platform to mobilize partnerships and direct investment and ensure cultural infrastructure and creative spaces grow alongside the city.

2. **Commit to a no net loss standard for public and private cultural spaces.** Adopt cultural space provision & utilization standards that commit to a no net loss standard and include considerations for how to address displacement. Secure net new cultural infrastructure by providing clear, predictable requirements for City decision-making and development contributions.
3. **Embed a Percent for Public Art policy across all major capital projects.** Advance implementation of Mississauga's Public Art Plan by establishing a mandatory Percent for Public Art policy that secures predictable funding from public projects and encourages contributions from private development. Integrate public art into key growth areas such as infrastructure, transit, waterfront and cultural districts to build a cohesive, citywide network of artworks. This will embed art into the built environment, expand opportunities for artists and strengthen placemaking and cultural identity across Mississauga.
4. **Make cultural spaces easy to find, understand and use across the city.** Improve City communication platforms, channels and mapping to clearly present information about cultural spaces, amenities, facility rental opportunities and outdoor parks and open spaces that support cultural use. Pair these improvements with a coordinated communications approach that increases awareness, streamlines information and makes cultural spaces easier to discover, navigate and access.
5. **Pilot a strategy to increase affordable access to cultural space.** Pilot an Arts Assist Space Access Program to expand access to affordable, flexible cultural spaces across the ecosystem. Enable individual artists, collectives and creative businesses to work, rehearse and present locally by leveraging City tools to turn existing spaces into practical, affordable places for culture to happen.

6. **Unlock underused and unconventional spaces for local production and presentation.** Open up underused and unconventional space across City facilities in active use as a visible, city-wide production, rehearsal and exhibition network—giving artists more opportunities to show work locally and bringing art into everyday public spaces.

20 SPACES IN 20 MONTHS

7. **Activate vacant and underused commercial spaces through a meanwhile use program.** Establish a meanwhile Mississauga program to unlock commercial spaces for temporary, short-term and long-term cultural space and collaborate with commercial partners to develop standardized license templates, agreements and a landlord toolkit for activating vacant units and underused buildings and properties.

20 SPACES IN 20 MONTHS

8. **Bring new life to underused heritage buildings through cultural use.** Assess the condition of civic heritage facilities to identify spaces that could be retrofitted, repurposed and/or reactivated and publicly share the results to incentivize adaptive reuse for cultural uses in support of building a flexible, distributed network of cultural spaces across the city.

20 SPACES IN 20 MONTHS

9. **Advance the Peel Art Gallery, Museums and Archives (PAMA) transition to build a connected network of local cultural and heritage spaces.** Leverage Mississauga's role on the PAMA Transition Board to support a coordinated transition while reinvesting funding into local cultural infrastructure, museums and partnerships—advancing a more connected, accessible and distributed network of cultural and heritage spaces across the city.

IN PROGRESS

10. **Equip parks and public spaces for year-round cultural animation.** Invest in the basic infrastructure needed to host cultural activity and creative industry work outdoors—so every part of Mississauga has at least one reliable, serviced public space (power, water and accessible washrooms) that can support cultural production, events, performances and community gathering. Evaluate opportunities to increase City parks event support staffing and improve waste management practices.

Partnerships:

- Anchor cultural organizations (e.g., CreativeHub 1352, Art Gallery of Mississauga, Mississauga Arts Council, Heritage Mississauga)
- Institutional partners (post secondary, libraries, school boards)
- Developers & landowners (meanwhile use, community benefit charges, etc.)
- Arms-length delivery entities for major sites or clusters (e.g., Art Gallery of Ontario, National Gallery)



The Sunshine Orchestra with A.R. Rahman, Living Arts Centre (Adam Pulicchio Photography)

5 Elevate Mississauga as a Significant Cultural and Tourism Destination

Mississauga is dreaming big. The City is on the cusp of becoming a significant cultural destination, positioning arts, culture and heritage as city-building tools that attract tourism, drive investment, build global recognition and deepen local pride and belonging. To realize this vision, the City will take on a stronger role and act as a catalyst—creating opportunities, building strategic partnerships, aligning efforts and mobilizing resources. This work relies on collaboration with other levels of government, the private sector and national institutions, working together to support investment in space, skills, policy and funding.

Focusing on the development of key cultural and tourism destinations will build on Mississauga's strong foundation of vibrant neighbourhoods and local places.

This will raise the city's profile regionally, nationally and internationally, attracting diverse audiences, elevating local talent, increasing tourism and strengthening the creative economy. Incorporating a mix of uses—such as housing, office space, parks and community and recreational spaces—will further support cultural vitality, community health and well-being and employment growth. Building on the momentum already present in neighbourhoods, the City can continue to invest in vibrant places through public art, placemaking, welcoming public spaces and creative uses in unexpected settings, while ensuring equitable access across the city.

The City needs to act now to elevate the Downtown Core and Mississauga's waterfront as key cultural and tourism destinations, while continuing to grow its identity as a Music City. This includes investing in world-class performing arts venues and landmark cultural infrastructure that support creation, production and exhibition, alongside education partnerships and a consistent cultural events calendar. Building on Council-approved strategies, the City can expand its Public Art program through sustained investment and integration into major capital projects, using art to shape public spaces, reflect diverse community stories and create ongoing opportunities for artists.

In parallel, continued support for museums, Indigenous cultural spaces and affordable creative hubs will help build a more connected and inclusive cultural landscape. Together, these actions will transform Mississauga into a leading cultural destination and a key engine of the creative economy.

1. **Advance Mississauga as a leading Music City by leveraging strengths and supporting purpose-built venues.** Leverage local talent, organizational strength and development opportunities to support local music education, creation and performance, strengthen nightlife and cultural identity and bridge gaps between information spaces and large destinations. Prioritize mid-sized venues (400–600 capacity) and smaller, genre-specific “music-first” spaces (100–300 capacity) across emerging creative clusters. Act as an enabler by using planning, policy and investment tools to attract private sector development.

BIG MOVE

2. **Establish Mississauga as a global leader in public art.** Accelerate implementation of the Public Art Plan through sustained and predictable investment, delivery and partnerships—working towards at least 10 high-impact temporary, digital and permanent public artworks per year across priority locations such as infrastructure, transit corridors, destination parks and cultural districts. Build on ongoing work in accessibility, equity, truth and reconciliation to further strengthen Mississauga’s leadership in public art.

10 ARTWORKS PER YEAR

3. **Elevate Small Arms Inspection Building (SAIB) as a vibrant waterfront hub for artists, production and innovation.** Enhance the Small Arms Inspection Building (SAIB) North Building as a collaborative creative hub for artists, production and innovation, supported by local partnerships and increased community access.

IN PROGRESS

4. **Develop the Arsenal Lands into a dynamic waterfront centre for culture, learning and community.** Create an integrated cultural centre that combines spaces for learning, artistic creation, community gatherings and performances and explore the feasibility of affordable housing for the cultural and creative community.



Small Arms Inspection Building (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

5. **Activate Lakeview Village’s cultural blocks and pier as a vibrant waterfront destination.** Advance the Lakeview Village cultural blocks and waterfront pier as vibrant destinations featuring venues, versatile performance areas and engaging public spaces as part of developing a landmark Lakeview Cultural District in Mississauga’s east end.

6. **Advance exceptional destination-scale facilities through the Living Arts Centre (LAC) and Downtown Core lands redevelopment and other major capital projects.** Recognize the Living Arts Centre area and adjacent City-owned downtown properties as a unique chance to revitalize Mississauga’s downtown into a lively cultural and commercial hub. Pursue a phased plan for music venues, creative spaces and cultural infrastructure that strengthens Mississauga’s regional role in music and performance. Base decisions on professional studies, ongoing feedback and market feasibility, while ensuring no net loss of existing cultural space or functions.

BIG MOVE



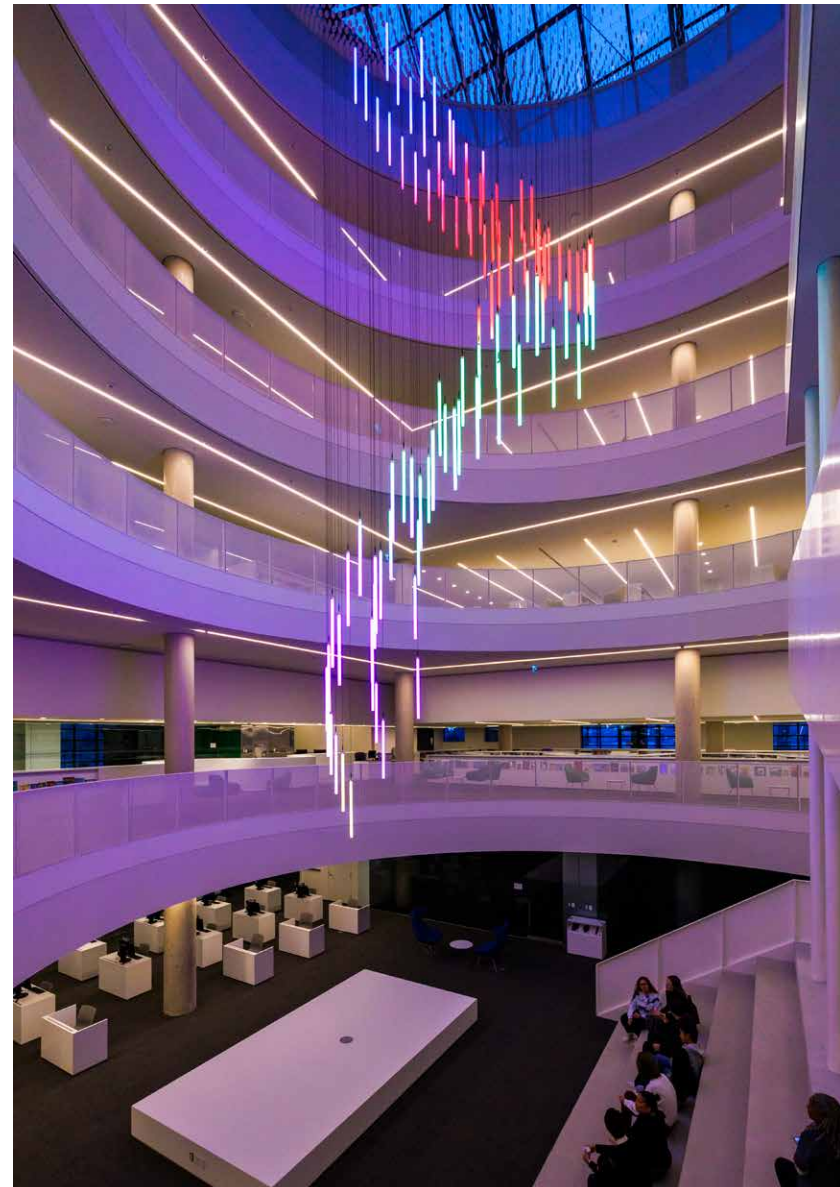
Vision for Downtown Core (City of Mississauga)

7. **Establish a destination-scale exhibition presence that integrates local gallery expertise with major institutional partnerships across the City.** Advance new gallery and exhibition spaces while positioning the Art Gallery of Mississauga as an operational partner. Leverage post-secondary partnerships such as with Blackwood Gallery at the University of Toronto Mississauga for programming. Pursue partnerships with institutions such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, McMichael Art Gallery and National Gallery to develop an annex and touring exhibition model that expands access to major exhibitions and strengthens Mississauga's cultural profile.

BIG MOVE

Partnerships:

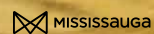
- Anchor cultural organizations (e.g., CreativeHub 1352, Art Gallery of Mississauga)
- Institutional partners (national galleries, museums, educational institutions)
- Developers & landowners
- Other levels of government (Regional, National, International)
- Arms length delivery entities for major sites or clusters (e.g., Art Gallery of Ontario, National Gallery)



Lightfall, Nathan Whitford, Hazel McCallion Cental Library (Adam Pulicicchio Photography)

Getting It Done

Living Arts Centre Resident Artists
(Adam Pulicchio Photography)





What Mississauga is doing now

In 2024, Mississauga launched its latest Culture Plan, outlining eight guiding principles and 24 recommendations that set clear priorities for strengthening a vibrant, accessible and sustainable cultural sector. Since then, the City has made great progress, but the scale of the challenge requires more accelerated, coordinated action that takes a comprehensive, ecosystem-wide approach.

Mississauga is making practical moves to turn planning and policy work into tangible progress for its cultural and creative sector. The City is prioritizing efforts to expand cultural spaces and support artists in neighbourhoods. Policies, by-laws and processes are being optimized to reduce regulatory barriers and improve planning tools. The following sections outline steps Mississauga is taking to deliver quick solutions, remove obstacles and better align resources for long-term growth in cultural infrastructure and creative spaces, and long-term sector growth.

Strengthening and Expanding Cultural Spaces

Cities are finding it harder to move cultural space projects forward because of frequent legislative changes. To address this, many cities are taking a proactive approach to pinpoint priority areas and potential sites for such developments by implementing plans, policies and strategies. This approach helps them to better seize opportunities as they emerge.

The City is taking three steps to improve access to cultural infrastructure and creative spaces throughout Mississauga:

- **Building a city-wide network of functional and accessible cultural spaces.** The City is upgrading parks with infrastructure like power, water, waste management and

audio-visual systems to improve community spaces for festivals and events. Efforts are underway to assess what support is needed for events with 1,000–3,000 attendees.

- **Creating accessible hubs for creativity.** Mississauga is using its recreation centres and libraries to develop cultural programming and art hubs throughout the city. These spaces will feature furniture and equipment for digital and visual arts, support early creative education and encourage lifelong learning and inclusion through arts programs.
- **Identifying and advancing cultural and tourism investments to build destinations.** The City's Tourism Division is undertaking a Tourism/Destination Infrastructure Gap Study to identify priority cultural and tourism investments that will strengthen Mississauga's position as a competitive destination. The study will look at current assets, market demand and opportunities to guide future investment, with the goal of supporting visitor growth, strengthening the local economy and making better use of cultural infrastructure across the city.

Mississauga is advancing plans for Clarke Memorial Hall, building on its legacy of hosting music, theatre and community events at the heart of Port Credit, to understand what is required to reposition the site as a viable music

venue. This includes reviewing capital needs and potential operating models such as City-led, arms-length or partner-delivered approaches.

Together, this work takes a coordinated approach to advancing a pipeline of where the City should invest and how these assets can be delivered and operated over the long term. It also considers how Clarke Memorial Hall could contribute to a broader network of cultural venues that support local activity, attract visitors and increase access to cultural space.

Supporting Community Vibrancy and Creativity in Neighbourhoods

To build creative, lively neighbourhoods in Mississauga, the City is supporting local cultural activities and making it



PRIMO (Christian Alexis Osorio), Summer Concert Series, Port Credit Memorial Park (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

easier for residents, artists, and partners to realize their ideas. This strengthens and grows cultural districts and creative clusters, encouraging community animation and creativity.

The City is undertaking two measures to foster vibrancy and encourage creativity within neighbourhood communities:

- **Creating a one-window permitting process for creative ideas.** The City is streamlining culture-related projects by creating a clear process from concept to implementation, replacing informal methods. The framework covers development proposals for cultural spaces, integrates cultural heritage into interpretation and enables community-led public space projects. This coordinated approach embeds culture earlier in city-building and supports placemaking, public art and small-scale activations throughout Mississauga.
- **Expanding cultural districts and emerging creative clusters.** Mississauga's Cultural Districts are local hubs for creative expression, social interaction, and community building. The City has recently updated their mapping on the Planning Hub to boost awareness. The 2051 Mississauga Official Plan

includes new policies to promote investment and cultural growth in these districts. As new creative centres and business clusters emerge, the City will seek ways to support them through planning tools, programs, and incentives.

Creating a Supportive Environment for Artists to Grow and Succeed

Mississauga's cultural system is active, engaged and producing strong cultural outputs, but is not yet designed to translate that activity into sustained sector growth, economic impact, or long-term cultural legacy. Programs are full and participation is strong, however, artists struggle to build sustainable careers, creative businesses remain under-supported and cultural system coordination is weak—internally and with external partners. The City is conducting a review of how it delivers services and is developing and updating key strategies to support sustained sector growth.

The City is taking two steps to support creative talent:

- **Updating By-laws to enable live music.** Between 2023 and 2026, the Music Office ran a Live Music Noise By-Law exemption pilot to encourage more live music. The program is now permanent, with by-law amendments allowing



Living Arts Centre Resident Artist (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

increased live music in Cultural Districts while protecting residential areas. This approach helps build a music-friendly city and supports local talent, employment and sector growth.

- **Updating the Culture Policy to tackle current challenges.** The City is revising the Culture Policy to address current challenges in the cultural and creative sector. The update aims to support sustainability by integrating fair and competitive compensation standards for artists, cultural workers, creative professionals and community partners.

Improving How We Work

The City will undertake a targeted effort to better align its cultural services across departments, strengthening overall coordination, leadership and accountability. This work will address fragmented responsibilities and support a more integrated and strategic approach to advancing culture across the organization. Through improved alignment and clearer roles, the City will reinforce culture as a core city-building function and enhance its ability to act as a steward, enabler and strategic investor in Mississauga's cultural ecosystem.

The City is already taking two steps to improve internal communication and

coordination by bringing teams together, breaking silos and aligning priorities for integrated cultural planning and service delivery. Dedicated networks support collaboration and coordinated action across culture-related areas, which include:

- **Cultural Ecosystem Working Group:** The City is uniting representatives from various culture-related lines of business to boost coordination, set common priorities and streamline implementation of cultural initiatives. This approach fosters communication and collaboration among relevant City teams, helping align policies, activities and investments to advance shared cultural goals.
- **The Culture Collective:** A Community of Practice that unites staff from different departments to enhance collaboration, learning and innovation in arts, culture and heritage. It enables coordinated program delivery and fosters continuous cross-departmental teamwork.

Where more help is needed: *Culture Barriers*

While Mississauga is evolving its role to support a thriving cultural ecosystem, significant barriers remain beyond the City's control. These challenges are shaped by broader economic conditions, market pressures and policy gaps that affect the cultural and creative sector. Addressing them will require coordinated action from provincial and federal governments, alongside industry and institutional partners.

The following barriers require immediate attention to support sector stability, growth and public impact.

1. **Increased affordability and financial stability depend on coordinated action across governments and the private sector.**

High rents, rising operating costs and limited affordable space continue to constrain cultural production and presentation in Mississauga. Organizations face growing financial pressure, while artists struggle with unstable incomes and limited access to affordable live/work and rehearsal space. Traditional sources of support, such as fundraising, sponsorship and philanthropic giving, have become more competitive and less predictable, while costs continue to rise. This shift is placing strain on organizations of all sizes, limiting their ability to plan, invest in growth and sustain creative work over time.

Mississauga is expanding access to cultural space and embedding culture into planning policy and asset management. However, municipal action alone cannot offset broader cost pressures without aligned sector, provincial and federal support.

- **Local support:** Mississauga's cultural and creative sector can take a more coordinated approach to fundraising and sponsorship. By working together, the sector can

strengthen its collective capacity to engage public, private and philanthropic partners to better align funding with shared priorities. This includes exploring the creation of a sector-led foundation to coordinate fundraising and sponsorship efforts, in collaboration with the City, to support sustainable careers, enterprise growth and job creation.

SUPPORT NEEDED NOW

- **Provincial support:** Ontario can reduce costs and improve affordability by embedding culture within existing infrastructure, planning, housing and tax tools. This includes expanding and stabilizing capital funding for cultural infrastructure, particularly adaptive reuse and retrofit projects—by including culture as an eligible and prioritized category within provincial infrastructure and community facility funding programs.



Burnhamthorpe Community Centre Opening, 2024 (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

Through the Planning Act and Provincial Planning Statement, the Province can enable municipalities to protect cultural space using tools such as “no net loss” policies, cultural districts and venue protection mechanisms as intensification proceeds.

Affordability can be further advanced by recognizing artist live-work and cultural workforce housing within provincial housing programs, ensuring eligibility within existing funding streams. In addition, the Province can introduce or enable property tax relief measures for cultural spaces—such as subclasses or rebates—to reduce operating costs for cultural and creative uses.

SUPPORT NEEDED NOW

- **Federal support:** The federal government can reduce capital and operating pressures by expanding cultural infrastructure investment through programs such as the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund and other federal infrastructure streams, supporting accessibility upgrades, retrofits and sustainable building improvements including climate resilience and greenhouse gas emissions reduction.

SUPPORT NEEDED NOW

It can also introduce tax incentives such as credits or accelerated depreciation to encourage private developers and landlords to provide below-market cultural space. Finally, the federal government can support artist live-work housing by recognizing cultural workforce housing within the National Housing Strategy, Housing Accelerator Fund, and CMHC financing programs, ensuring integrated creative space and housing projects are eligible for support.



Light Up the Square & Santa Claus Parade 2025, Celebration Square (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

2. A stable and viable cultural workforce depends on leadership from governments and support from education and industry

Cultural workers face inconsistent income, limited benefits and fragmented career pathways. Without stronger workforce supports, the sector risks losing talent and limiting long-term growth.

Strengthening career stability requires coordinated investment in workforce development, training and industry partnerships to create clear pathways from education to employment and sustained professional practice.

- **Provincial Support:** The Province of Ontario can strengthen career pathways by embedding creative sector training within existing workforce development systems, including skills programs, training funds and post-secondary partnerships. Expanding support for industry-led training models—such as music, film, and digital media hubs—would align education with real-world employment opportunities.

Targeted investment in sector-driven training initiatives and centres of excellence, such as a Creative Skills Hub, can help build skills pipelines, connect talent to employers, and improve long-term workforce sustainability.

SUPPORT NEEDED NOW

- **Federal Support:** The Government of Canada can improve income stability by expanding workforce programs that support internships, micro-credentials and early-career employment. Enhancing existing initiatives such as Canada Summer Jobs and the Student Work Placement Program, alongside sector funding through Canadian Heritage and regional development agencies, can increase employment opportunities and reduce barriers to entry.

SUPPORT NEEDED NOW

It can also strengthen income potential by expanding export development supports, including funding for international touring, trade missions and creative market



East2West, NYE2026, Celebration Square (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

development. In parallel, the federal government can address systemic barriers such as high insurance costs by convening sector-wide solutions, including pooled insurance models or targeted support programs.

3. Greater visibility and market growth are achieved through collaboration across governments, institutions, and industry

Mississauga's cultural sector needs stronger connections to audiences, markets and national and international platforms. Limited visibility and access to distribution channels constrain growth, revenue generation and cultural impact.

Expanding market access requires collaboration across governments, institutions and industry to expand audience reach, strengthen cultural tourism and support export opportunities.

- **Provincial support:** The Province of Ontario can strengthen cultural visibility by aligning tourism and cultural funding to support major events, festivals and destination programming in cities like Mississauga.

This can be achieved by integrating cultural priorities within existing provincial tourism and events programs, ensuring mid-sized cities are eligible for funding that supports large-scale, high-impact events. Expanding or refining these programs to include dedicated streams for cultural event attraction would help municipalities compete for and host major programming that drives visitation, economic activity, and cultural visibility.

SUPPORT NEEDED NOW

Ontario can also support bids for major events by providing coordinated funding, marketing support and cross-ministry alignment (tourism, culture, economic development). Establishing an event attraction or matching fund would help municipalities secure major festivals, touring productions and international programming.

- **Federal support:** The Government of Canada can expand national and international market access by supporting partnerships with national cultural institutions, including museums, galleries and performing arts organizations. This can be delivered through Canadian Heritage and national agency funding programs that support touring exhibitions, co-presentation and shared programming, helping to increase access to high-quality programming while reducing presenting costs for local Mississauga organizations.

SUPPORT NEEDED NOW

To further strengthen global market access, the federal government can expand creative export and international market development programs, including funding for touring, trade missions and global promotion through Canadian Heritage, Global Affairs Canada and regional development agencies. This can include scaling up funding streams to help creators build audiences, generate revenue and showcase Canadian culture and creativity globally.

Addressing these barriers requires aligning provincial policy tools, federal funding and national programs and industry partnerships to reduce costs, stabilize careers and expand market opportunities—ensuring Mississauga’s cultural ecosystem can grow, compete and deliver long-term public value.



Blooms & Berries 2025, Benares House Museum (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

Coordinating Action through Partnership

*Fungi of the Woods, LeuWebb Projects,
Burnhamthorpe Community Centre (Adam
Pulicicchio Photography)*



The Beach Boys, Mississauga Sports & Entertainment Centre, 2025 (Adam Pulicichio Photography)

The Mayor's Arts and Museums Task Force reinforced that Mississauga's cultural system is built on a strong foundation of engaged communities, dedicated organizations and businesses and a growing base of creative talent. Moving forward, the focus is on bringing these elements together with intention so they align and strengthen one another, amplifying the role of arts, culture and heritage as drivers of social connection, economic vitality and a shared sense of identity.

At the heart of this next phase is a renewed way of working together. Task Force members and previous engagements have emphasized the importance of building trust-based relationships grounded in mutual respect and shared objectives. As this work evolves, the City will shift from a consultation model to co-creation, transparency and long-term partnership. Mississauga's cultural ecosystem will maintain open dialogue and work collaboratively to translate actions into practice.

This work will be grounded in a shared Cultural Ecosystem Framework to be co-developed with the cultural and creative sector and other partners. The Framework will clarify roles and responsibilities across the ecosystem, including the City, civic cultural affiliates, professional organizations and community partners. Over time, these collaborations can deepen into more sustained partnerships, including opportunities for cultural and creative sector organizations and leaders to deliver services through aligned agreements.

The City will establish the following structures to strengthen dialogue, accountability and collaboration and support ongoing coordination and shared progress:

- Establish a **Mayor-led Culture Delivery Board** to provide strategic oversight, help remove barriers, align strategic partners and maintain accountability toward shared cultural goals. Membership will include partners from across the cultural ecosystem, prioritizing inclusivity and people connected to the lands of and living in Mississauga.
- Publish an annual **State of Culture** report to share progress, results and upcoming priorities.
- Measure outcomes in collaboration with the cultural and creative sector and publish a scorecard on cultural space, access, permitting, professional sector and visitor economy impact, public art and local economic contribution.

Together, the City of Mississauga and the Task Force will establish the **Creative Mississauga Network**, creating opportunities for exchange and joint initiatives to nurture the cultural ecosystem. Through these spaces, partners will connect, identify shared priorities and develop collaborative projects.

Key initiatives to be implemented within the next 12 to 18 months include:

- An annual **Creative Mississauga Summit** convening the city's cultural ecosystem, including artists, collectives, cultural organizations, small businesses, creative industries, educational institutions, community groups, funders, sponsors and philanthropists, private sector partners and other city-building sectors.

The Summit will strengthen connectivity and discoverability of talent and opportunities across the city, with a focus on:

- Knowledge exchange
- Structured networking
- Mentoring and collaborative problem-solving
- Partnership match-making
- Guidance on navigating municipal procedures and available resources

- Quarterly, open invitation **Cultural and Creative Sector Meetings**, hosted by the sector in City venues to support collaboration and knowledge sharing with City staff attending to listen and learn about current sector work and how the work compliments the action plan.
- City-led, ad hoc **Sector Reference Tables** bringing together interest holders across disciplines and related sectors (including health, tourism, tech, social services, etc.) with equitable representation across career levels and backgrounds to inform planning and decision-making. These groups will be called upon as needed to offer timely, coordinated insight on emerging developments and project opportunities.

Together, these approaches create the conditions for meaningful partnerships to take shape and support Mississauga's growth into an integrated, resilient and inclusive cultural ecosystem. Success will look like greater access to resources and opportunities, stronger alignment across partners and increase visibility and discoverability of local talent, programs and spaces. It will be marked by sustained collaboration, growing sector capacity and clear accountability, alongside stronger recognition of the sector's social and economic impact.

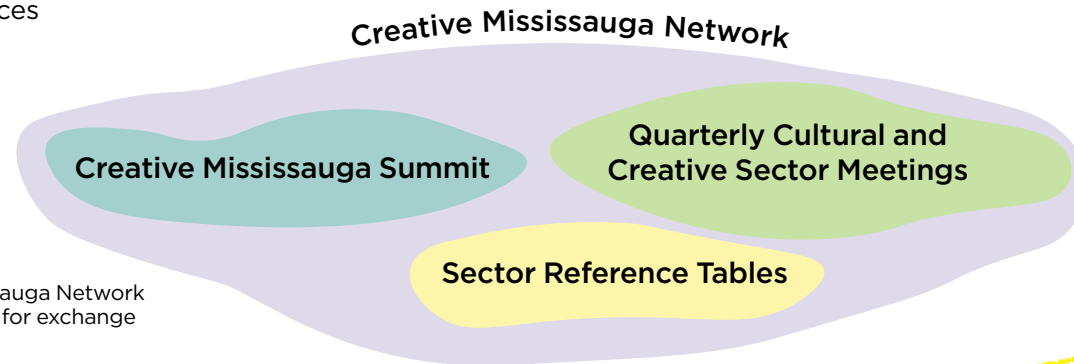


Figure 8. The Creative Mississauga Network will create new opportunities for exchange and collaboration.

Appendix

Jungle Book, Kidoons, WYRD, The 20K Collective, Living Arts Centre (Adam Pulicicchio Photography)

Task Force Members



Art Gallery of Mississauga (AGM)

The Art Gallery of Mississauga (AGM), established in 1987, is a public, not-for-profit gallery showcasing contemporary exhibitions by regional, national and international artists. AGM collaborates widely to support both established and emerging talent, focusing on themes relevant to Mississauga's diverse identity—including newcomer populations, Canadian art, colonial history, Indigenous land and community investment in culture. The gallery champions artists reflecting local diversity and encourages critical research, contributing to creative discourse and broadening access to contemporary art at all levels.

Represented by: Anna Gulbinski, Executive Director



Visual Arts Mississauga

Founded in 1977, VAM is a leading creative centre in Mississauga focused on Art Education, Art Exhibition, and Community Outreach. VAM enriches the community by offering studio arts courses for all ages, art camps, exhibitions, parties, and school or corporate programs. For over 45 years, VAM has provided fine art courses and creative opportunities, with a commitment to ongoing community development through art.

Represented by: Nasreen Gilbert, Executive Director



CreativeHub 1352

Creative Hub 1352 aims to transform the Small Arms Inspection Building into a multidisciplinary creative space. The hub encourages exploration and collaboration, featuring a renewed interior and a dynamic community. Since its founding, Creative Hub 1352 has partnered with the community and stakeholders to deliver programs and events. As a catalyst and leader, it supports adaptive use and management of the building, fostering creative programming that promotes cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Represented by: Margot Stevens, Chair, Board of Directors



Mississauga Arts Council (MAC)

Since 1981, MAC has supported artists through service-based programs, artist-led funding, and promoting the arts to strengthen Mississauga's cultural community. By fostering creative collaboration, building partnerships, creating opportunities, and connecting artists with audiences, MAC helps sustain a vibrant local arts economy.

Represented by: Mike Douglas, Executive Director



Frog in Hand

Frog in Hand is a Mississauga-based, not-for-profit dance-theatre company and registered charity. Since 2012, we've been a home-grown success story, creating meaningful, accessible, and site-specific work shaped by the communities and spaces we inhabit. As a network of storytellers, we infuse dance with theatre to support under-represented identities, promote well-being, and spark joy. Our mission is to create, perform, and teach dance-theatre as a powerful act of creative placemaking—transcending boundaries and fostering cross-cultural connection. We are committed to radical inclusivity, community connection, and care-driven processes, using the arts to reflect diverse stories and build hope for lasting social change. Frog in Hand brings people together—through movement, storytelling, and shared experience.

Represented by: Colleen Snell, Co-Founder and Artistic Director



Cirque Revolution

Cirque Revolution delivers innovative event entertainment, redefining what's possible for audiences worldwide. With over a decade of experience, our team energizes galas, corporate events, festivals and more with memorable performances at the heart of every occasion. Cirque Revolution aims to transform typical gatherings into extraordinary experiences through intentional, experiential design.

Represented by: Julie Danaylov, Co-Founder



Metalworks Institute

Metalworks Institute, founded by Gil Moore as an extension of Metalworks Studios, offers a superior curriculum and unique educational experience. The school fosters mutual respect, inspiring mentorship and balanced values. Its modern campus, next to the studio complex, provides top tools, instructors and environment, setting the benchmark in entertainment arts education.

Represented by: Craig McDonald, President



Mississauga Symphony Orchestra (MSO)

The Mississauga Symphony Orchestra, led by Maestro Denis Mastromonaco since 2013, is a leading Canadian hybrid orchestra featuring professionals and skilled amateurs. Since adding the Mississauga Symphony Youth Orchestra in 2014, it has become a key force in Mississauga's classical music scene through education, performance and community involvement. The MSO is known for diverse concerts, acclaimed operas and its place in the Mississauga Music Walk of Fame.

Represented by: Claudine LaRochelle, Managing Director



Heritage Mississauga

Founded in 1960, Heritage Mississauga is the city's only independent charitable organization dedicated to preserving, documenting, and celebrating Mississauga's rich and diverse heritage. As the city's leading heritage resource, we connect people with the stories, places, and traditions that have shaped our community through research, education, exhibitions, publications, oral history projects, and public programs and events.

Based out of the historic Robinson-Adamson house, "The Grange", Heritage Mississauga serves one of the world's most diverse cities and is committed to sharing the stories of all who have contributed to the city's growth—from Indigenous communities and early settlers to newcomers and long-time residents. By bringing local history to life and promoting an appreciation for our shared heritage, we foster understanding, inclusion, belonging, and civic pride while helping to preserve Mississauga's unique identity for future generations.

Represented by: Jayme Gaspar, Executive Director



Tom Barlow (Musician)

Tom Barlow is an award-winning Canadian singer-songwriter, four-time JUNO Award nominee, two-time MARTY Award recipient, and Canadian Rising Star Award winner. Over a career spanning four decades, he has earned more than two million streams across digital platforms, performed on five continents, and built a reputation for powerful, high-energy live shows and socially conscious songwriting.

In 2026, his single Supersonic Quadraphonic was selected by Rolling Stone Magazine as one of its Top 20 Songs of the Month. His work has also been praised by the Toronto Sun, National Post, and BBC Radio UK.

Beyond the stage, Barlow is a passionate mentor and advocate for the arts. Through his long-running Mississauga-based Monday Night Jam, now entering its third decade, he has helped provide performance and development opportunities for hundreds of emerging artists while continuing to support and strengthen Mississauga's vibrant arts community.



SAWITRI Theatre Group

Founded in 2003, SAWITRI Theatre Group is an award-winning, Mississauga-based, not-for-profit organization dedicated to amplifying South Asian narratives through innovative, multilingual theatre. Under the artistic leadership of Jasmine Sawant and Shruti Shah, SAWITRI has produced more than 85 works, including 20 full-length plays in English, Marathi, Gujarati, and Hindi. It has also established the SAWITRI Shorts Theatre Festival since 2018 and the Mississauga Multilingual Fringe Festival since 2021. SAWITRI's mandate is to inform, entertain, and heal through the arts. The company advances culturally responsive storytelling that fosters cross-cultural dialogue, increases representation on Canadian stages, and provides professional development opportunities for both emerging and established artists. Through bold artistic risk-taking and deep community engagement, SAWITRI creates accessible theatre experiences that strengthen cultural understanding, nurture artistic growth, and reflect the diverse realities of contemporary audiences in Mississauga.

Represented by: Jasmine Sawant, Founder and Artistic Co-Director



Sampradaya Dance Creations

Sampradaya Dance Creations (SDC) is an award-winning Canadian dance company known for its culturally rooted, interdisciplinary work and socially resonant storytelling. Founded in 1990 by internationally acclaimed Bharatanatyam soloist, scholar, and educator, Lata Pada C.M, and with Jasmine Sawant at the helm of operations since 2004, the company is a pioneering force in classical South Asian dance in Canada and globally. Specializing in classical and contemporary Bharatanatyam, SDC, now under the artistic leadership of Suma Suresh, is committed to artistic excellence, creating captivating solo and ensemble works that blend traditional Indian dance with innovative contemporary artistry. Through national tours and festival performances, SDC engages diverse audiences across Canada and internationally, uniting cultures through the transformative power of Bharatanatyam.

Represented by: Jasmine Sawant, Executive Director

Growing the Cultural Ecosystem:

Key Priorities and Actions

The following actions aim to better coordinate Mississauga's cultural assets, talent, and municipal initiatives into a more effective ecosystem, addressing barriers to growth, access, and visibility. Over five months, the Task Force made up of representatives from across Mississauga's cultural ecosystem and City staff identified common challenges and priorities. They highlighted the need for more activation, stronger promotion and partnerships, better access to spaces and simpler City processes.

The Task Force's goal was to inform future Council decisions and create a more integrated strategy for supporting the city's arts, culture and museum sector. These recommendations now form the basis for coordinated action as the City moves from consultation to implementation in its next phase of cultural development.

Priority 1. Tell stories of the lands and people of Mississauga

- 1.1. Shift the mandate to tell Mississauga's stories through community-led arts and creativity.
- 1.2. Become a centre for Indigenous culture, history and contemporary expression.
- 1.3. Redefine heritage as a living, city-building asset that supports storytelling, placemaking and economic opportunity.

Priority 2: Optimize City Systems & Processes

- 2.1. Create flexible lease provisions for City-owned cultural spaces.
- 2.2. Remove operational barriers and reduce costs for low-risk cultural activities in City-supported cultural spaces.
- 2.3. Put Mississauga's arts and culture in front of people through a new or enhanced city-wide festival and event calendar.
- 2.4. Adopt a tiered, outcomes-based cultural funding model aligned to sector needs.
- 2.5. Host more outdoor events and create tools, processes and standards to enable communities.

Key Priorities and Actions

Priority 3: Build a Sustainable Creative Economy

- 3.1. Make Mississauga-based creative talent the default choice for City-led activity and programming in City spaces.
- 3.2. Make it easier and expected to hire local creatives by connecting people to Mississauga cultural talent, vendors and service providers.
- 3.3. Grow what works – expand support for high-impact creative sectors.
- 3.4. Build careers—not just programs—for creative talent.
- 3.5. Build a long-term investment strategy for the cultural and creative sector.

Priority 4: Protect & Create Cultural Spaces

- 4.1. Protect existing cultural infrastructure and creative spaces through a Cultural Space Provision and Utilization Program.
- 4.2. Commit to a no net loss standard for public and private cultural spaces.
- 4.3. Embed a Percent for Public Art policy across all major capital projects.
- 4.4. Make cultural spaces easy to find, understand and use across the city.
- 4.5. Pilot a strategy to increase affordable access to cultural space.
- 4.6. Unlock underused and unconventional spaces for local production and presentation.
- 4.7. Activate vacant and underused commercial spaces through a meanwhile use program.
- 4.8. Bring new life to underused heritage buildings through cultural use.
- 4.9. Advance the Peel Art Gallery, Museums and Archives (PAMA) transition to build a connected network of local cultural and heritage spaces.
- 4.10. Equip parks and public spaces for year round cultural animation.

Key Priorities and Actions

Priority 5: Elevate Mississauga as a Significant Cultural and Tourism Destination

- 5.1. Advance Mississauga as a leading Music City by leveraging strengths and supporting purpose-built venues.
- 5.2. Establish Mississauga as a global leader in public art.
- 5.3. Elevate Small Arms Inspection Building as a vibrant waterfront hub for artists, production and innovation.
- 5.4. Develop the Arsenal Lands into a dynamic waterfront centre for culture, learning and community.
- 5.5. Activate Lakeview Village's cultural blocks and pier as a vibrant waterfront destination.
- 5.6. Advance exceptional destination-scale facilities through the Living Arts Centre (LAC) and Downtown Core lands redevelopment and other major capital projects.
- 5.7. Establish a destination-scale exhibition presence that integrates local gallery expertise with major institutional partnerships across the city.

Culture Funding Responsibilities

Who Supports What

Below are funding bodies supporting cultural and creative organizations, businesses, and artists. They are grouped by geographic level to show where support is available.

Local Level

These funding sources are available to creatives and organizations that are Mississauga-based and/or who's programming primarily happening in Mississauga.

City of Mississauga

- Arts and Culture Operating
- Cultural Festivals and Celebrations
- Project Grant

Mississauga Arts Council

- Micro Grant

Mississauga Foundation

- Hazel McCallion Arts, Culture & Heritage
- Novo Nordisk Chronic Disease Fund

Port Credit Community Foundation

- Community Grant

RAMA Gaming

Provincial Level

These funding sources are delivered at the provincial level to creatives and organizations that are Ontario-based and/or who's programming and services are being delivered within or outside of Ontario.

Government of Ontario

- 8 grant streams that support: events, capacity building, Francophone communities, student employment, infrastructure, older adults and skills development

Hydro One Energizing Life Community Fund

Ontario Arts Council

- 39 grant streams that support: professional development, accessibility, equity-seeking communities, arts by discipline, northern Ontario, Francophone communities, touring, exhibition and marketing development

Ontario Community Changemakers

Ontario Creates

- 4 grant streams that support content creation, marketing and business and international development

Ontario Lottery & Gaming

Ontario Trillium Foundation

- 2 grant streams that support different levels of community investment, youth and families and system change

Who Supports What

National Level

These funding sources are delivered by national-level funders to creatives and organizations that are Canada-based and/or who's programming and services are being delivered within or outside of Canada.

B.I.G. Black Ideas Grant: Bridge and Build

- 3 grant streams that support development, capacity building and community spaces

Canada Council for the Arts

- 5 grant streams that support events, festivals, capacity and skills building, sustainability, artistic practice, arts and culture exports and international exhibition, and First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities

FACTOR

- 7 grant streams that support artist development, sound recording, entrepreneurship, songwriting, live performance and video content

Government of Canada

- 8 grant streams that support arts presentation, festivals and events, development, books, magazines and periodicals, music, cultural spaces, journalism, cultural exports, film making and older adults Canada Arts Presentation Fund

TD Park People

TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

Telefilm Canada

- 2 grant streams that support feature films, emerging artists, artist development, documentaries, marketing, festivals, cinema, industry programs, theatrical exhibition



Definitions

Access: the ability to obtain or use a service, and including affordability, accessibility and universal design.

Accessibility: the design of products, devices, services or environments for people who experience disabilities.

Adaptive Reuse: the reuse or conversion of an existing building for a purpose other than that for which it was originally built or designed.

Affordability: the extent to which something is affordable, as measured by its cost relative to the amount that the purchaser is able to pay.

Art: the inventive use of talent, creativity and technique to produce an original expression of an idea with an aesthetic quality. This includes but is not limited to: literature, dance, theatre, visual arts, crafts, performance, media arts, music, film, print, sculpture, photography, design and so on.

Business Improvement Area (BIA): an organization set-up to provide certain business promotion and improvement functions within a set geographic area in a municipality.

Capacity Building: the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive in the fast changing world.

Circular Economy: an alternative to the traditional linear “make-use-dispose” process. The circular economy model aims to minimize the use of raw materials, maximize the useful life of a product, and create value for the product to be used again once it reaches end of life.

City: when written with an upper case C, it refers to The Corporation of the City of Mississauga; when written with a small case c, it refers to the city in general.

Climate Change: describes a change in the average conditions—such as temperature and rainfall—in a region over a long period of time.

Civic Cultural Affiliates: arts, culture and heritage-based organizations and groups that provide programs and services to the community that receive funding and/or have signed agreements with the City of Mississauga.

Civic Heritage Facilities: are City-owned heritage facilities that include heritage halls and museums, along with associated outbuildings.

Co-design: is a collaborative, participatory approach where interest holders work as equal partners with professionals to define a problem and design solutions.

Collaboration: where two or more people, organizations or groups work together to produce, create or achieve something.

Community: a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; a particular area or place and its inhabitants; a group of people with a common history and/or interests.

Community Art: temporary or permanent art that is based in a community setting, often publicly-accessible and involving the community in its creation through collaboration, production and/or dialogue. Community Art can be created by community members or by engaging a professional artist(s) and can include a wide variety of activities that include neighbourhood generated murals, arts in schools and process-orientated art engaging the community at large

Community Development: community development activities that build capacity and stronger communities through identifying and addressing needs, assets and priority investments.

Community Programming: refers to programming and activities that are developed, led and delivered by community organizations, groups, collectives and individuals usually to the community in which they live and serve.

Creative Clusters: a concentration of cultural and creative industries, individuals, businesses and institutions at the same location.

Creative Economy: the economic system where value is driven by human imagination, intellectual property and cultural innovation rather than traditional resources like land, labour or physical manufacturing.

Creative Economic Development: is a strategy that drives growth by utilizing human creativity, arts, culture and intellectual property as a driver of wealth and job creation.

Creative Hubs: spaces where creative industries can design, test, scale and launch enterprising new ideas; creative hubs provide multiple users with shared space, equipment and amenities; opportunities for idea exchange, collaboration and/or professional development and; offer space and programming that is accessible to the public.

Creative Industries: businesses and individuals that use talent, creativity and skill to produce tangible and intangible goods that are usually protected by copyright and require constant adaption. Examples include but are not limited to: advertising, architecture, arts, antiques, crafts, design, fashion, film, photography, software, computer games, electronic publishing, music, visual and performing arts, publishing, television and radio.

Creative Spaces: physical structures and elements at different scales that are deliberately designed to support creative work processes or to facilitate creativity. The scales of the physical structures and elements can vary from individual items, such as pieces of furniture, to the room's layout and interior design, and from the architectural building to the location within a specific civic neighbourhood. It covers spaces in both educational and corporate/business environments, as well as special forms such as co-working spaces or innovation labs.

Creatives: an inclusive term used to define a larger group of creative practitioners working in the creative sector as well as those working with heritage and living heritage, including but not limited to artists, musicians, designers, performers, storytellers and so on.

Cultural District: a well-defined and recognized mixed-use geographic area in the city, with a high concentration of cultural facilities, creative enterprises, arts venues, cultural resources and activities that serve as an anchor attraction. For more detailed information related to Cultural Districts, refer to the City's Cultural Districts Implementation Plan.

Cultural Expression: refers to the various ways individuals and communities communicate their unique identities, values, beliefs, and shared experiences. It can manifest through visual and performing art, music, language, celebrations, storytelling, rituals and architecture serving to preserve and celebrate heritage and foster social connection.

Cultural Identity: a person's sense of belonging, identification and connection to, a specific culture(s) or group(s). It is shaped by many factors including shared beliefs, values, traditions, customs, language, historical experiences and ways of navigating the world. It is ever evolving, changing as a person learns, moves, connects and lives.

Cultural Incubator: an organization or program designed to empower artists, creative entrepreneurs and cultural nonprofits by nurturing and accelerating creative ventures in early stages of development. Cultural incubators provide a supportive environment with access to resources such as space, funding and training, as well as mentorship and networking opportunities.

Cultural Infrastructure: includes hard infrastructure such as the buildings, assets, structures and spaces where culture is consumed, experienced, participated in, showcased, exhibited or sold. For example, museums, galleries, theatres, cinemas, libraries, public art, rehearsal, studio and production spaces, meeting rooms, historic and heritage sites, parks and open spaces, alleyways and streets. Also includes soft cultural infrastructure that is needed to provide and maintain culture and includes investment, resourcing, governance and education.

Cultural Narrative: are the shared stories, beliefs and myths that communities use to understand the world and shape their collective identity and values.

Cultural and Creative Sector: all persons, organizations, businesses and industries involved in the broad ecosystem of disciplines, practices and supports that shape cultural life in communities. This includes:

- Heritage and libraries (archives, libraries, cultural and natural heritage);
- Live performance including festivals and events;
- Visual and applied arts (original visual art, reproductions, photography, crafts, advertising,

architecture, and design);

- Written and published works (books, periodicals, newspapers, collected information, and other published materials); and
- Audio-visual and interactive media (film and video, broadcasting, interactive media, music publishing, and sound recording).

It also includes education and training, as well as the governance, funding, and professional supports that sustain the sector's infrastructure.

Cultural Tourism: an industry sub-sector that caters to people interested in learning more about the arts and culture of a region, country or people. Tourists can be local or from more distant locations, depending on the type of demand for the destination. Heritage tourism is a related term.

Cultural Resource: tangible and intangible elements that support culture, including cultural spaces and facilities, natural and cultural heritage, programs/activities and all other infrastructure and financial support available for the development and maintenance of culture.

Cultural Venues: refers to City of Mississauga owned facilities that primarily host cultural programming, activities, festivals and events. They are comprised of Mississauga Celebration Square, Mississauga Sports & Entertainment Centre, Living Arts Centre, Small Arms Inspection Building, Meadowvale Theatre, Maya Prentice Theatre, Adamson Estate, Benares Historic house, Bradley Museum and Leslie Log House.

Cultural Vitality: refers to communities' ability to create sustain, and engage with arts and culture as a core dimension of everyday life.

Cultural Workers: are people involved in creative industries fields through: primary cultural production, distribution and interpretation of cultural and creative works and/or cultural management. This definition is based on joining of the creative and noncreative jobs.

Culture: ideas, customs, language, beliefs, history, traditions and social behaviour of a particular people or society, including artistic expression and natural and human heritage.

Discipline: a specific branch or category of creative and/or artistic practice, defined by its distinct medium, techniques or creative focus.

Diversity: the state of being diverse. It is what differentiates each one of us, including but not limited to ethnicity, gender, how we think, what we value, cultural backgrounds and experiences that shape our perspectives.

Emerging Artist: an artist in the early stage of their professional career who may have specialized training (not necessarily gained in an academic institution) and has created a modest, independent body of work that may include professional exhibitions, commissions, presentations and/or installations.

Equity: fair or impartial treatment. Equity recognises that every individual is unique. Being equitable means accounting for varied circumstances and allocating the resources and opportunities each person needs to receive an equal outcome.

Equity-deserving communities: groups of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers to resources and opportunities that are available to other members of society and that are necessary for them to attain just outcomes. The groups can include racialized individuals, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, women and 2SLGBTQ+ individuals.

Established artist: an artist who has an extensive body of work, a history of national and/or international presentation and who has achieved wide recognition.

Grassroots: a type of approach or action that relies on local community participation to achieve sustainable, localized activity and programming.

Health: a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Heritage: social, cultural and ethnic elements which produce a layering of culture from the past and into the future.

Inclusion: the action or state of including or being included within a group or structure. It is a mindful effort to ensure everyone feels valued, respected and supported.

Interactive Media: a range of interactive content available through a variety of digital platforms and devices including computers, game consoles and mobile devices. Video and audio content can include game design and development, cross-platform entertainment, news and interactive training.

Key Performance Indicators:

measurements collected and used by organizations to evaluate impact and results of programs, services, initiatives and project outcomes. This information is used to track progress and support future decisions.

Lived Experience: the firsthand, personal knowledge and understanding that an individual gains through direct, personal involvement in life events and circumstances.

Mid-career Professionals: are established creatives with more than five years of professional activity.

Municipal Accommodation Tax: a tax that is charged by a municipality on short-term rentals, usually hotels, motels and other accommodations, for stays that are 30 days or less in length. It is applied only to the percentage of the room cost alone. In Mississauga, this charge is six (6) percent. The revenue from this tax is split between Tourism Mississauga and the City of Mississauga.

Partnership: where two or more parties agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests. They may be individuals, businesses, schools, governments or a combination, advancing interests through development, administration and/or granting.

Percentage for Public Art: a way for a municipality to secure funds for public art through municipal and/or private capital construction projects. In such a program, the municipality may encourage a contribution equal to 0.5% to 2% of the gross construction costs of the development.

Permanent Public Art: most commonly existing as a sculpture, permanent public art has also been integrated into playgrounds, public squares and buildings. Permanent public art is designed to remain in the public realm indefinitely; as such, it requires support through a level of community consultation as it will become a long-standing feature of the community. It also requires long-term planning, such as a maintenance plan and budget, due to its expected longevity of display and placement.

Placekeeping: a notion tied to Indigenous community perspectives; in contrast to placemaking, placekeeping is a collaborative and multi-faceted process to engage the residents who already live in a space and allow them to preserve the stories and culture of where they live.

Placemaking: a collaborative and multi-faceted process for the planning, design and animation of public spaces. Placemaking has the ability to inspire a community to reimagine and reinvent familiar public spaces, building character, quality of place and inspiring community pride.

Pop-Ups: a concept that has become popular in the last decade and can involve the use of empty shops or other buildings or spaces for art exhibitions, restaurants or performances. Pop-ups can last for a few hours, weeks or months, and in some cases can become permanent fixtures due to their popularity.

Professional Artist: an individual who earns all or a sizable portion of their livelihood through remuneration for artistic performance or creation and is recognized by their peers as an artist.

Public Art: art found in the public realm that is created through a formal process by a professional artist or in collaboration with artists. This work can be in any medium and take on any shape, form or scale; it should be accessible to the public and free for all to enjoy. Public art can be permanent or temporary, stand-alone, site-specific or integrated into other design elements such as street furniture, architecture and/or landscape architecture.

Public Art Program: formally established in 2010, the City of Mississauga's Public Art Program aims to contribute to the unique identity of Mississauga. The program is managed by the City's Culture Planning and Public Art unit and helps to create vibrant public spaces and streetscapes, making Mississauga a place people want to live, work and visit.

Public Spaces: the space to which the general public has a right of access, which can include the space around, between and within buildings that are publicly accessible.

Reconciliation: a process of healing relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms. A reconciliation framework is one in which Canada's political and legal systems, educational and religious institutions, corporate sector and civil society function in ways that are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which Canada has endorsed. For the City of Mississauga, Truth and Reconciliation would see the City have collective understanding of history, inclusion of Indigenous culture and worldviews, authentic relationships with Indigenous Peoples and systems that benefit everyone.

Registered Culture Programming:

City-run performing, visual, digital and literary arts classes and programs that run for a specified number of weeks and require prepayment and registration before attending.

Storytelling: the interactive art of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener's imagination.

Sustainability: managing current needs while creating and building processes and systems that generate long-term stability.

Universal Design: the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

