

Update: Arts and Culture

Initiative Title:	Arts and Culture
City Council Sponsor(s):	Councillor B. Henderson / Councillor S. McKeen
Supporting Department and Lead Staff:	Community Services, Lyall Brenneis / Kate Gunn

BACKGROUND:

- Arts and culture are a key component of a vibrant community. As well as contributing to quality of life, the arts also have a significant positive economic impact on our city. Edmontonians have long embraced the importance of their arts, heritage, culture and festivals. In 2007 Edmonton was recognized by the federal government as the Cultural Capital of Canada. Today, diverse and creative Edmonton artists continue to achieve local, national and international prominence for their work. Edmonton's diverse heritage is a celebrated and embraced aspect of cultural life.
- The Arts and Culture Initiative is broad and all encompassing, including the many facets of City support for arts, heritage and culture and their advancement in the next three decades. The Initiative is rooted in and guided by the seminal ten year **The Art of Living** plan, approved by City Council in 2008.
- **The Art of Living** plan outlined 28 recommendations in arts and heritage recognized as foundational to the development of arts, culture and heritage in Edmonton. Together, these recommendations form a road map to achieve the City's bold vision of Edmonton as a "*recreation city, an arts city.*"
- Council's endorsement of **The Art of Living** plan resulted in significant changes to the role of the Edmonton Arts Council. The current five year Service Agreement (2011- 2016) between the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Arts Council outlines the significant role of the Edmonton Arts Council in areas such as space, incubation, investments, public art program, service provision and recognition. In addition, the creation of the Edmonton Heritage Council in 2009 was a tangible example of the successful implementation of one of the keystone heritage recommendations in **The Art of Living**.
- Edmonton's Arts and Culture Initiative is guided by a number of City Policies, including but not limited to: C549: Public Art Conservation, De-accession and Re-site Policy; C548: Public Art Accession, Selection Criteria and Gift Policy; C547: Public Art Administration, Registration and Outreach Policy; and C458C: Percent for Art Policy.

Recent Achievements:

- Of the 28 (17 Arts and 11 Heritage) recommendations in **The Art of Living**, over 18 have been implemented or are in progress. While there is still work to do,

great strides were accomplished in 2009-2014 , the half way mark, including as highlights:

- Establishment and growth of the Edmonton Heritage Council
- Doubling the funding for the arts via the Edmonton Arts Council in the past three years
- Creation of Historian Laureate and Poet Laureate positions
- Support for the Comprehensive Museums Strategy and Edmonton Heritage Network
- Establishment and implementation of the Edmonton Heritage Council Community Investment Program (Operational and Program Grants), administered by the Edmonton Heritage Council.

CURRENT FOCUS:

- The Arts and Culture Initiative needs to continue to lean in and champion what's in place as articulated in The Art of Living Implementation Plan. Under the leadership of the Edmonton Arts and Heritage Councils, the City will continue to advance the implementation of this plan and its recommendations in arts and heritage.
- Some significant flagship initiatives in the next few years include: the City Museum Strategy, Enterprise Square Galleries Partnership initiative, Arts Common on 118 Avenue, the Galleria project, to name just a few.
- This may be the time to look back to **Edmonton 2040: Prosperity and Creativity**, the final report of the Mayor's Arts Visioning Taskforce in 2011. Although not formally approved by Council, an update and progress assessment on the recommended initiatives in this report may be timely. Key examples of recommendations that have some momentum include the possible City purchase of MacEwan West Campus and the plans for the Galleria performing arts centre. It may be appropriate to reconvene key players from the 2011 Arts Visioning Committee, who aimed to foster innovation and catalyze creativity to connect the business and arts communities, and do this review.
- New for 2014: Building on the review of **Edmonton 2040: Prosperity and Creativity** outlined above, the Arts and Culture Initiative and its Council champions may also consider taking a renewed look at connecting Edmonton's arts and business communities. A new direction for 2014 may see a renewed effort to engage next generation diverse business leaders in the city, and linking them with emerging diverse artists. In the spirit of the significant Make Something Edmonton Taskforce, it may be timely to catalyze a new relationship between an untapped generation of corporate and business sector professionals and the arts in Edmonton. This might see brokering a unique opportunity to this Next Gen cohort of business leaders with a chance to get involved in building a vibrant arts and culture city. Further exploration of this new targeted direction by City Council champions will be conducted in 2014.

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

- Edmonton's Arts and Culture Initiative aspires to achieve the following outcomes:
 - Foster a vibrant and thriving arts, heritage and culture milieu as an integral part of the life of Edmontonians
 - Enhance the pride of Edmontonians in their arts and culture
 - Increase the range and scope of year round festivals in Edmonton
 - Enhance the attractiveness of Edmonton in all seasons
 - Grow Edmonton's presence in the national and international filming industry

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC DIRECTION:

- In addition to aligning with the City's Strategic plan, **The Way Ahead**, Edmonton's Arts and Culture Initiative is guided by the objectives outlined in Edmonton's People Plan, **The Way We Live**, as follows:
 - Objective 2.3 The City of Edmonton is a diverse, creative city with a rich and vibrant arts and cultural community.
 - Objective 2.5 The City of Edmonton promotes the celebration of diversity, milestones, achievements and festivals.
 - Objective 2.6 The City of Edmonton hosts world leading arts, cultural, sports and entertainment events that attract a local, regional and global audience.
- Secondly, the Arts and Culture Initiative support the directions of **The Way We Prosper**, the corporate economic development draft plan approved by Council in March 2013. The importance of promoting and supporting Edmonton's arts and culture industry is an integral part of this comprehensive economic development strategic plan.
- Finally, the Arts and Culture Initiative is rooted in the **Art of Living Implementation Plan 2008 - 2018** and **Edmonton 2040: Prosperity and Creativity**, the final report of the Mayor's Arts Visioning Committee in 2011.

START-UP BUDGET REQUIREMENTS:

- Strategies are in place for financing of 2014 Art of Living initiatives and activities through current City of Edmonton programs, the Edmonton Arts Council, and the Edmonton Heritage Council.

TARGET DATE FOR COMPLETION OF PROJECT PLAN:

- The **Art of Living Implementation Plan** provides the project plan roadmap for this Initiative.