

Policy Title: Cultural Policy	Policy Number: P-CD-01
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Related Legislation: Municipal Government Act, R.S.P.E.I. 1988, Cap. M-12.1., Sec. 86(2)(b) Related Bylaw: N/A	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Cultural Policy identifies the diversity of cultural assets in Charlottetown and establishes how the municipality can help the community achieve its collective goals. A cultural policy’s vision, values, and strategies enable municipal leaders to make informed decisions about investing in the arts, what services to offer, and what strategies to employ to meet community goals.

Culture has long been recognized as the “Fourth Pillar of Sustainable Development,” an essential component and vehicle for social equity, environmental responsibility, and economic vitality.

This document recognizes the valuable role that culture plays locally in Charlottetown in defining the identity the city offers residents and visitors, driving inclusive economic growth, improving quality of life, building healthier communities, celebrating heritage, building a legacy for the future, serving as a vehicle for inclusion, and addressing social issues facing Canadian municipalities.

In 2023, responding to recommended actions in the *New Arts and Culture Strategy for the City* (2013) and the *Public Art Plan: Making Public Art a Priority* (endorsed in principle in 2022), the City created its first full-time cultural position to support and guide cultural development. This role led the development of this policy and will be responsible for its implementation.

Charlottetown’s arts and culture community is resourceful, tenacious, and inventive. It has thrived despite its small size and challenges. This policy aims to fan the flames of the spark that makes Charlottetown distinct, diverse, and dynamic by bolstering the sector with increased investment. With significant infrastructure and talent already in place, this policy aims to develop the sector and maximize its economic, community, and social impact.

2.0 PURPOSE

This policy aims to provide a framework to guide increased support for arts and culture and define how the City of Charlottetown will capitalize on strengths, address challenges, and help advance the community’s objectives and cultural vision.

3.0 SCOPE

The City of Charlottetown undertook this Cultural Policy as part of its *Strategic Plan 2022-2025: a community for everyone* that embraces the arts and culture sector as an essential component of inclusive economic growth.

Though the term “culture” is broad and inclusive, this policy focuses explicitly on charting a path forward in the growth of the arts and creative industries. This policy is intended to replace the existing *Cultural (Arts and Culture) Policy* from 2006 and complement existing strategies and plans that guide the City’s priorities in economic development, festivals, events, tourism, and heritage.

These plans include the *Strategic Plan*, the *Official Plan*, the *Public Art Policy*, the *Charlottetown Public Art Plan: Making Public Art a Priority*, the *Charlottetown Festivals & Events Approach to Growth: 2019-2024*, the *City of Charlottetown Integrated Community Sustainability Plan*, the *Heritage Preservation Bylaw*, and more.

The Cultural Policy emerges from the context and landscape of these plans and strategies but does not directly address events, the music industry, tourism, or built heritage.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Arts** refers to the various disciplines of expressing ideas through talent, creativity, and technique. It includes, but is not limited to, the field of creation explored through music, theatre, dance, visual art, craft, media art, literature, and arts administration.
- 4.2 **Arts Advisory Board** refers to the volunteer board appointed and mandated by Council as per their Terms of Reference.
- 4.3 **City** refers to the Corporation of the City of Charlottetown.
- 4.4 **Council** refers to members of Council, which includes the Mayor. Items that need Council approval require a majority vote of Council.
- 4.5 **Culture:** refers to how a group of people is rooted within a place. It is a set of values, traditions, histories, customs, and expressions that define the heart and soul of a community. It reflects the expressions and identities of the people who live here and evolves to be accessible, inclusive, and welcoming to newcomers. In Charlottetown and on Epekwitk, the Epekwitnewaq Mi’kmaq have occupied this Island and expressed their culture here for over 12,000 years. Culture then and today is expressed through the practices of vibrant artists and creative individuals, organizations and industries, the shared stewardship of the natural and built environment and waterways surrounding us, the celebration of our diverse and expanding history, and distinct seasonal traditions.
- 4.6 **Cultural Initiatives** refer to the production and presentation of activities conducted by amateur, emerging, and professional musicians, actors, directors, playwrights, dancers, choreographers, visual artists, designers, producers, curators, art educators, arts administrators, filmmakers, videographers, craft artists, artisans, makers, writers,

editors, publishers, event coordinators, entertainment promoters, historians, researchers, librarians, and archivists.

4.7 **Equity Deserving Group** refers to communities that experience significant barriers to participating in society. This could include attitudinal, historical, social, and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. It is inclusive of Indigenous persons, Mi'kmaq, racialized persons, persons of Black or African descent, Black Islanders, persons with disabilities, Women, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

4.8 **Public Art** refers to a temporary or permanent artwork in any media created by an artist or artist group that is, has been, or will be sited or staged in a public space, and is acquired in compliance with the City of Charlottetown's Public Art Policy.

5.0 OUR VISION

Distinct, Diverse, and Dynamic

Charlottetown's arts and culture celebrates and supports the communities, landscapes, waterways, and heritage that make us **distinct** while being inclusive and responsive to **diverse** voices – past, present, and future – as we work together to be a **dynamic** cultural hub that sustains artistic growth embraced by all who call this place home.

6.0 OUR VALUES

6.1 **Accessibility** means ensuring that the community has access to arts and culture, as few barriers as possible to participation in cultural activities, and that the City is an enabling rather than regulating force for arts and culture.

6.2 **Accountability** means we will be open and honest with residents, ourselves, and each other, recognizing that relationships need to be built at the speed of trust, requiring the time and effort to establish and sustain them.

6.3 **Adaptability** means revisiting and adapting this policy and associated plans, policies, and protocols to reflect the community's changing needs.

6.4 **Collaboration** means creating opportunities for cooperation, working with all levels of government, encouraging partnerships between community organizations, and applying and integrating an arts and culture lens across municipal departments, programs, and services.

6.5 **Excellence** means we seek out best practices and that professionalism in the cultural sector will be recognized, encouraged, and communicated with the public.

6.6 **Inclusivity** means welcoming and involving new residents and newcomers and celebrating and honouring the diverse people and equity-deserving groups who call this place home.

6.7 **Reconciliation** means listening, learning, and dismantling barriers to Indigenous peoples celebrating and expressing their languages, cultures, and traditions and recognizing the vital role of Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq in our shared history, present, and future.

6.8 **Stewardship** means caring for and celebrating our built and natural heritage, creative communities, landscape, waterways, and ecology.

7.0 OUR CHALLENGES

7.1 **Awareness:** Understanding of partner objectives and the intrinsic, economic, social, and community value of the arts are generally limited.

7.2 **Identity:** The narrative Charlottetown presents to the world does not fully capture the colourful, complex, and diverse stories, identities, and expressions of the people and communities who live here.

7.3 **Accessibility:** Limited accessibility and availability of venues, exhibition spaces, and cultural hubs are barriers to playfulness, experimentation, and overall accessibility of the arts.

7.4 **Funding:** Limited sustainable funding opportunities due to competing priorities.

7.5 **Retention:** Short summer season and broader community challenges such as housing, healthcare, and transit impact the attraction and retention of residents, students, and creative talent.

8.0 OUR STRENGTHS

8.1 **Talent:** A passionate, diverse, and dynamic artistic community boasting exceptional local talent.

8.2 **Small but Mighty:** For a City this size, Charlottetown excels in terms of arts organizations, venues, cultural spaces, festivals, events, and amenities.

8.3 **Proximity:** Creative communities, funding organizations, and decision-makers are interconnected and accessible, making it an optimal environment for mobilization, growth, and innovation.

8.4 **Locality:** A scenic waterfront, abundant parks and green spaces, and easy access to rural areas, trails, beaches, and nature inspire us and enrich our cultural connection with the landscape.

8.5 Storied Capital City: Rooted in history, Island traditions, and beautiful natural and built environments, there is a strong sense of place appreciated by residents and tourists alike.

8.6 Pride in Arts and History: The public values and supports the arts, takes pride in Islanders' artistic achievements, and remains committed to preserving culture and heritage.

9.0 OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

9.1 Priority: Creativity on Every Corner

Challenge: Certain public spaces are underutilized with respect to telling colourful, complex, and diverse stories, identities, and expressions of the people and communities who live here.

Outcome: Public spaces are utilized to create paid opportunities and support artists' practice where possible.

Strategies and Actions:

- 9.1.1 Utilize infrastructure as opportunities to showcase and create paid opportunities for local artists, including, but not limited to, adding art to utility boxes, bus shelters, and streetlights.
- 9.1.2 Partner to brand Charlottetown as an arts and culture destination and promote our year-round cultural offerings to residents and to local, regional, national, and international visitors.
- 9.1.3 Council will contribute at least one percent (1%) of the cost of appropriate City capital projects to a Public Art Reserve Fund to create and install public art.
- 9.1.4 Review the Public Art Policy to reflect the Charlottetown Public Art Plan (2022) and implement best practices.
- 9.1.5 Maximize the use of parks, green spaces, and spaces such as the Cultural Pavilion and Event Grounds to make more spaces available for music, pop-up exhibitions, and other cultural initiatives.
- 9.1.6 Develop an annual grant program for arts and culture that provides financial support to arts and culture organizations, groups, or individuals to maximize the economic and social impact of the arts.
- 9.1.7 Partner to develop an artist-in-residence program for artists.
- 9.1.8 Explore opportunities for a City of Charlottetown Art Collection or rental program that showcases Charlottetown visual artists in municipal facilities.
- 9.1.9 Take an "all of Charlottetown" approach to investment in public art, placemaking, and cultural initiatives.

9.2 Priority: Champion the Arts

Challenge: Culture is not currently a lens for municipal strategy and investment.

Outcome: Arts and culture are integrated into municipal activities, and there are coordinated efforts to engage with the artistic community within all relevant municipal activities.

Strategies and Actions:

- 9.2.1 Guide and support City staff to apply a lens of arts, culture, and creativity within all appropriate City activities, including in the development of policies, strategies, plans, and budgets.
- 9.2.2 Engage City staff in training and education on arts and culture-related topics.
- 9.2.3 Apply the arts to facilitate greater collaboration within the City corporation to provide stronger support to the arts, culture, and creative sector.
- 9.2.4 Communicate with and educate Council, City staff, stakeholders, and the public about partner objectives and culture's intrinsic, economic, social, and community value so that they might become cultural ambassadors.
- 9.2.5 Collaborate to explore ways the arts can serve the City's sustainability, environmental, climate adaptation, and climate action goals.
- 9.2.6 Incorporate arts and culture initiatives within appropriate partner and Civic events and festivals year-round.
- 9.2.7 Continue the Charlottetown Arts and Culture Awards and explore ways to increase the event's engagement, awareness, impact, and community relevance.
- 9.2.8 Continue highlighting the impact of culture in the City's Community Report, including details about advancing this policy's Strategic Priorities.

9.3 Priority: Further Reconciliation, Embrace Diversity, and Enhance Accessibility

Challenge: There is room to grow in celebrating and engaging equity-deserving groups and making arts and culture accessible and inclusive.

Outcome: The City's programs and activities celebrate the colourful, complex, and diverse stories, identities, and expressions of the people and communities who live here and encourage the participation of all residents.

Strategies and Actions:

- 9.3.1 Develop, in consultation and partnership with the local Indigenous community, a Road to Reconciliation Framework to help guide the City's process in furthering Reconciliation.
- 9.3.2 Act on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action relevant to the municipality and the arts.
- 9.3.3 Include Mi'kmaq voices, talents, and contributions within cultural renewal efforts in Charlottetown.
- 9.3.4 Collaborate with community organizations to determine ways to engage and support equity-deserving groups' cultural visibility, history, and storytelling, particularly with Indigenous peoples, racialized persons, Black Islanders, newcomers, persons with disabilities, and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
- 9.3.5 Apply an equity lens to the City's arts advisory boards and arts and culture awards nominations.
- 9.3.6 Work with disabled artists, cultural workers, other levels of Government, and the City of Charlottetown's Civic Board for Persons with Disabilities to review public art and grant processes to identify and address accessibility barriers.
- 9.3.7 Engage with grantee organizations to determine how they can offer more accessible and inclusive spaces and experiences.
- 9.3.8 Increase community engagement and the involvement of the arts community in cultural initiatives and events.

9.4 Priority: The City as a Cultural Connector

Challenge: Lack of communication across the sector and limited awareness of the community benefits of arts and culture.

Outcome: A stronger stakeholder communication network and heightened awareness of shared strategic objectives leading to innovative cultural experiences.

Strategies and Actions:

- 9.4.1 Support opportunities for networking among arts and culture organizations, non-profits, community members, City staff, and Council.
- 9.4.2 Explore possibilities for intersectoral collaboration to communicate and solve complex issues through the arts, including, but not limited to, loss of social cohesion or increased social disorganization, Indigenous rights, racism and racial inequality, mental health, and climate change.
- 9.4.3 Partner to bring people from different backgrounds together to share knowledge across different practices, sectors, cultures, and generations.

- 9.4.4 Identify opportunities for the arts to promote and support our heritage and museum partners' objectives and vice versa. This includes employing the arts to communicate and celebrate Charlottetown's history and heritage and seeking paid opportunities for artists within heritage activities.
- 9.4.5 Encourage strategic partnerships to offer affordable, accessible, and low-barrier spaces for creating and presenting cultural initiatives.

9.5 Priority: Retain and Sustain

Challenge: Short summer season, limited opportunities, and broader community challenges impact resident, student, and artistic talent retention.

Outcome: A thriving, resilient, and sustainable cultural sector that offers opportunities for local artists to express themselves, innovate, and experiment.

Strategies and Actions:

- 9.5.1 Cultural initiatives supported by the municipality should, when possible, favour artists based on Prince Edward Island, off-Island artists collaborating with Island artists, regional artists, artists based in Canada, and all other artists, in that order.
- 9.5.2 Identify and develop new funding opportunities for arts and culture.
- 9.5.3 Develop clear and transparent funding guidelines and processes for arts and culture grants, with multiple streams and intake periods throughout the year.
- 9.5.4 Explore and develop arts and culture grant funding streams that respond to community needs.
- 9.5.5 Support cultural initiatives that directly support the development of creatives – including professional opportunities, skills development, and growth.
- 9.5.6 Provide support for initiatives that offer year-round or off-season cultural initiatives.
- 9.5.7 Partner to determine how the municipality can support growing sectors and industries that support economic development, talent retention, audience development, and skills development.
- 9.5.8 Continue investing in the success, longevity, and growth of established cultural institutions in Charlottetown that inspire excellence and contribute to the local arts ecosystem through operating support and grants in lieu of taxes.
- 9.5.9 Support community partnerships that will expand the availability of affordable spaces for artistic innovation, authentic expression, and creativity.