



A United Vision:
**GUELPH'S
COMMUNITY PLAN**



Arts and culture sector workshop summary



December 18, 2018

Hosted by:

Patti Broughton, Executive Director of Guelph
Arts Council

Trevor Lee and Colleen Clack, Deputy Chief
Administrative Officers, City of Guelph

A Community Plan workshop with community builders and local arts and culture leaders to gain their perspective on the importance and value of including arts and culture priorities in the development of Guelph's Community Plan.



Arts and Culture Sector Workshop

Hosted at one of Guelph's newest community hubs and shared spaces, 10 Carden (10C), located at 42 Carden Street.



On December 18, 2018, Patti Broughton, Executive Director of Guelph Arts Council, with Trevor Lee and Colleen Clack, Deputy Chief Administrative Officers, City of Guelph, hosted a Community Plan workshop. Community builders and local leaders in the arts and culture sector provided their input with respect to the inclusion of arts and culture priorities in the development of Guelph's Community Plan.

Acknowledgements:

The City of Guelph is grateful to the local arts community for their participation in the workshop. It was a time of honest dialogue, championing this important initiative and helping to shape the Community's Plan that will guide our community for the next 10 years and more.

Agenda:

- Welcome greeting from Marva Wisdom, Community Plan Co-Chair and external consultant
- Welcome from Trevor Lee, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Services
- Remarks from Patti Broughton, Executive Director, Guelph Arts Council
- Community Plan progress report and what we are hearing from the community from Jenny Smith, Manager Corporate and Community Strategic Initiatives
- Facilitated activities led by Kelly Guthrie, Community Engagement Coordinator and Stewart McDonough, Advisor Strategy and Innovation.
- Facilitated conversation and activities:
 1. Community shares something they are proud of in their work or sector
 2. Community identifies what barriers are in the way of achieving work in this sector
 3. Community discusses and shares what would be a win for Guelph's arts and culture sector
 4. Community highlights one thing they would like to see happen next
- Next steps and questions
- Thank you and closing summary by Colleen Clack, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, Public Services, City of Guelph



What we heard:

The arts and culture scene in Guelph inspires people to become residents of this great community.

- Art is extremely important to communities.
- It breaks down barriers, creates safe places to explore and express yourself and brings community together
- “Art is not a beautifying element—it is core to the success of a vibrant and growing community as well as an economic driver”
- Funding is the major barrier/obstacle for most arts and culture organizations
- Arts and culture builds bridges across all generations

1. A few stories from the arts and culture community.

“With close to 3 decades of expertise working in three different performing arts centres in three different communities, I have been involved in over 5,000 arts & culture events in my workplace. All of these in some way help to enhance quality of life and contribute to a sense of belonging”.

“Something I am very proud of is working with all walks of life to connect a wealth of community resources (people, orgs etc.) that cross the arts, education, mental health, corporate and international channels. I have been an educator for children and adults with a focus on unity and diversity and exploring what it means to be a community leader, and what it means to be a global citizen (world citizenship). At the core of these underlying core principles is inclusion for all, a place for everyone in society. I am a person committed to shining light on collective areas. I work with a variety of organizations from Guelph Little Theatre to hosting international visitors.”

“Proud of my role founding the Guelph Jazz Festival that has received numerous prestigious awards and built a tremendous international reputation. The festival is heralded for its unique mix of one-of-a-kind artistic programming and distinctive community spirit. Several people have indicated that they moved to Guelph because of the Festival and we know too, that it is a

significant tourist draw. Most importantly, I am proud of the role it has played in contributing to the quality of life for people in our community”.

“Mary’s Wedding, summer 2018 at Guelph Civic Museum, wanting a connection to J McCrae. This play however is really about everyman or woman. The boy Charlie and the girl Mary represent everybody. With a very limited budget, my role in bringing together a talented crew and cast, support from family and friends. Made this wonderful piece in which many audience members cried and still to this very day, people stop me in the store to share why they cried and to ask me to pass on their comments to the team that made it happen”.

“Focus on Nature story connecting kids to nature through photography. Conceived in Guelph by Shirley Hunt and Trina Koster. Collaboration with people in the arts (GAC) business (GCC) and education (school boards) and volunteers (PIN) and environment (Everdale GRCA). Grew into a popular local school program—word of mouth, reputation grew beyond Guelph-Wellington, and now the program is available in Kitchener-Waterloo, Oakville, Burlington, Milton and next year in Hamilton and beyond.”

2. Barriers in the way of of the arts and culture community achieving success.

There are three fundamental themes that emerged as barriers for the arts and culture community: funding, connectivity and support.

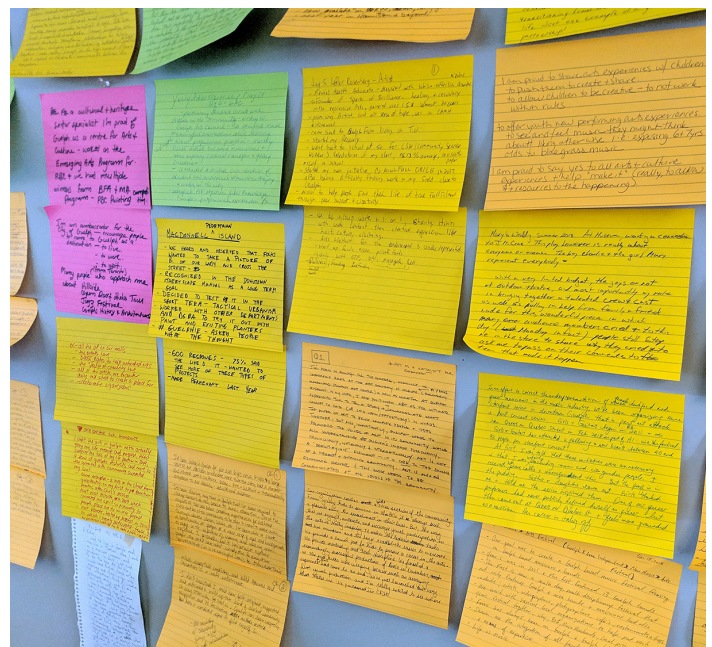
- **Funding:** Access to funds and production costs for arts and culture events are significant, including facility rentals, parking and the ability for artists to make a living wage.
- **Connectivity:** Inability to consistently connect with fans/patrons in a meaningful way that promotes arts and culture events, and encourages people to participate. A solution would be one central arts/ performance website as a central source for all groups in Guelph.
- **Support:** Mainly in the terms of human capacity, volunteers, stretched and/or burned out staff and boards. Lack of local business support where hotels and restaurants could benefit from tourism to the arts.



3. What would be a win for Guelph's arts and culture sector?

Five major themes emerged as future wins from the arts and culture community:

- Funding
- Strategic Plan
- Partnerships
- Connectivity
- Facilities



Funding:

- Operational funding/investment from City of Guelph with dedicated revenue stream for the arts with less bureaucracy/easy accessibility to funds
- Community support programs to make arts programming financially accessible—micro grants for tickets, specific projects and sustain artists while they create
- Funding mandatory as per cent of taxes
- Artists can access start-up support, similar to start-ups funding for businesses
- Arts funding from the City, administered at arm's length by the Arts Council in the form of grants to individual artists, collectives and arts organizations

Have an Arts Legacy Fund with the City of Guelph as first champion

Strategic plan:

- Come together with various arts and culture representatives in the industry and engage with youth, inspire future creators, cultural innovators and talk about ideas for how to move forward with an arts and culture strategic plan that facilitate sustainability and growth for Guelph
- Increase in focus on the arts and culture in Guelph leads to national and international attention, more restaurants, interesting shops, and increase in tourism. Include shuttle services from hotels to South End and Downtown
- We cannot be a New York, London or Paris without the arts—similar to Niagara on the Lake, Stratford, and Bayfield
- Recognize arts and culture as an economic driver, gather data on regular/annual basis that is accessible to the public and inform the integration of arts and culture with other sectors of the Community Plan

Make Guelph a Festival City and promote it as such—Guelph becomes Ontario's top Arts destination

Partnerships:

- Having a strong partnership with the City of Guelph that will withstand staff turnover
- Collaborations with schools, businesses (corporations, hotels, B&Bs, health organizations, restaurants, spas, etc.) that support the arts, recognize the importance of the arts and reciprocal business
- Work alongside other municipalities (Ontario, Canada and internationally) to partner on projects, share strategies and exchange assets

Champion the culture sector as a change making industry

Connectivity:

The ability to source and share information for the arts and culture community is identified as a major barrier to their success. Some of the wins identified are:

- Central website for all arts and culture with shared information, participation, studies and happenings shareable on multiple social platforms, that would increase greater diversity from outside of town
- GAC launches venue finders online
- More participation—diverse audiences, geographic reach, more awareness outside of Guelph
- Sold out houses, inspiring performances that exceed expectations and audiences buzzing with excitement
- Collaborative art presentations (visual events, performances)
- Economic impact realized from the attraction of the arts to Guelph

Guelph becomes a key arts and culture destination in South-western Ontario

Facilities:

There was an obvious vision for what the future of Guelph could look like with a strategy to address the barrier of facilities for the arts and culture community such as:

- New and dedicated accessible multi-purpose venues for performance and other arts related events that include spaces to hold classes, exhibitions, rehearsals and storage
- Accessible, affordable and free events/experiences for the community—activating public spaces with programming
- Artist-run creative hub/centre for the arts (old library as art centre, St. Georges Square, storefronts, brownfields lands, artist cultural nodes around the whole city)
- Full art studios on campus in summer months—camps, adult learners, seniors and exceptionally abled
- Inventory of all interior/exterior venues to identify what we have and what is missing

4. Community highlights what one thing they would like to see happen next

The focus for what happens next in the community relating to the arts and culture community includes addressing connectivity, building a strategic plan, funding and partnerships.

Connectivity:

- Having one central place to learn about all events in the city and a way to connect venues/organizations similar to the Community Plan workshops to learn what is happening, staying current and providing more support. It was also noted that GAC has an events page, calendar and regular email blast, perhaps there is an opportunity to explore how to build on this to showcase all the arts/performances in Guelph and meets all the needs of the community. Include e-newsletter and combine all mailing lists
- Providing online and paper resource that lists all events, programming etc. that is happening in Guelph, easy to update, free, available to all Guelph residents and visitors. Something you can subscribe to and get updates on social media
- Available list of all arts rental facilities
- Facilitated by GAC visit to many art venues and organizations to see them in action

Arts and Culture Strategic Plan:

- Create a cultural strategic plan that includes recognition of the economic impacts of the arts and funding thereof with a strong community engagement



If culture is a reason people are choosing Guelph, then culture should be fundamental to the community plan and city operations, making art & culture part of the city core deliverables, and positioned as its own department.

- Requires making a core financial investment into the culture sector—creative economy
- Do not make the arts the last piece of the conversation
- Create an arts and culture committee for space/venues, funding, representatives from all sectors
- Retrieve data from the city in two ways—economic impact of the arts and culture sector in Guelph; and, the arts community does not have access to patron emails or more detailed information and there needs to be a way to obtain this information

Next steps

During the last year, we have heard from many sectors in Guelph through community engagements and workshops that surfaced great ideas, comments and feedback. We have conducted similar workshops with the economic; environment; and social, health and education sectors. The planning, research and engagement phase of building the Community Plan wrapped up in January and the focus of activities has transitioned towards developing and presenting the Community Plan.

The Community Plan is being presented to City Council on May 16, 2019.

Additional Community Plan resources

- Community Plan website is guelph.ca/communityplan
- [Community Plan video](#)
- [Guelph as a Village of 100](#)—a fun way of looking at our community through numbers
- Watch quick, informative [videos](#) from our community

Our year of listening



A United Vision:
**GUELPH'S
COMMUNITY PLAN**
MAKE YOUR MARK.