



January 15, 2013

**The City of Charlottetown's Task Force on Arts and Culture
Presents a New Arts and Culture Strategy for the City**

FOREWORD

Dear Mayor Lee:

The Task Force on Arts and Culture is pleased to present to you and your team at City Hall its findings and recommendations on a new arts and culture strategy for the City of Charlottetown. We greatly enjoyed the work of designing and refining these recommendations. On behalf of all task force members, I thank you for the opportunity to produce this report, and for appointing our group to the important mission of further cultivating a community of artistic and cultural production, vibrancy and innovation.

The City of Charlottetown deserves credit for its pursuit and support of initiatives such as the 2011 Cultural Capital of Canada designation, and for recognizing the need to further develop the arts, culture and heritage sectors. Charlottetown can rightfully say it is taking a leadership role in engaging and nurturing Prince Edward Island's arts and cultural community, and in promoting the importance of the arts in our provincial capital. Our task force has full confidence in the City's ability to pursue these recommendations.

Sincerely yours,



Henk van Leeuwen
Chair, City of Charlottetown Task Force on Arts and Culture

cc: task force members Alan Buchanan, Jessie Inman, Ghislaine O'Hanley, Murray Murphy, Rob Oakie, Julia Sauve, Harmony Wagner, Josh Weale, Natalie Williams-Calhoun, and Darrin White

INTRODUCTION and BACKGROUND

In October of 2011, Charlottetown Mayor Clifford Lee announced the creation of a Task Force to examine ways in which the City can deepen its support of arts and cultural activity in the provincial capital. Specifically, the City asked the Task Force to design an Arts and Culture Strategy so Charlottetown could exploit and build upon the momentum generated by its 2011 Cultural Capital of Canada designation.

In February of 2012, the Mayor appointed the following people to the Task Force, all representatives of various cultural disciplines or industries and/or supporters of the arts: Alan Buchanan, Jessie Inman, Ghislaine O’Hanley, Murray Murphy, Rob Oakie, Julia Sauve, Henk van Leeuwen, Harmony Wagner, Josh Weale, Natalie Williams-Calhoun, and Darrin White. Ron Atkinson, the City of Charlottetown’s Economic Development Officer, serves as the Task Force’s City liaison.

OBJECTIVES:

In the development of a new Arts and Culture Strategy, the City asked the Task Force to consider the following in its deliberations:

- the review of the City’s 2006 policy on arts and culture,
- the identification of legacy projects arising from Charlottetown’s Cultural Capital of Canada campaign in 2011,
- ways in which the City can best communicate with its artists and cultural community,
- ways in which the City can grow its support of arts and culture,
- the determination of a public art strategy,
- the identification of other potential sources of revenue for arts and cultural activity, and
- the review of best practices in other municipalities.

RESEARCH:

As part of its work in designing a new arts and cultural blueprint for the City of Charlottetown, the Task Force examined how the cities of Halifax, Nova Scotia and Saint John, New Brunswick (a 2010 Cultural Capital of Canada designee) support and promote their arts and cultural communities. It explored what other municipalities and jurisdictions in North America and beyond do to encourage and ignite arts and cultural activity. It re-visited Charlottetown’s 2006 policy on arts and culture. It also took into

account feedback about 2011 Cultural Capital of Canada programming generated by Charlottetown residents and artists. The Task Force held a public meeting in Charlottetown at The Guild on May 28th, 2012 to seek opinions and suggestions on what should be included in a new Arts and Culture strategy for the City. Fifty people – many representing arts and cultural disciplines, businesses and groups – attended this meeting. The public was also invited to email suggestions to the Task Force. Many of the comments surfaced at the May 28th public meeting and delivered via e-mail have contributed to or helped shape some of the recommendations in this document.

A CASE FOR SUPPORTING THE ARTS:

Through the establishment of its Task Force and in its securing of the 2011 Cultural Capital of Canada designation, the City of Charlottetown has signalled its intention to deepen its support of arts and culture. However, more needs to be done to stimulate and nurture artistic activity in the provincial capital and to promote its arts, culture and heritage to Charlottetown residents, Islanders and tourists. Culture needs to be recognized as a source of public dialogue, education, wellness and community sustainability. It also needs to be recognized as a vital and critical economic stimulant for the City. According to the 2006 Iris Group study *The Economic Impact of Culture in Prince Edward Island and in the Charlottetown Region*, the economic impact on Prince Edward Island “of the major arts, heritage and culture sectors measured...was over \$100 million in gross output in 2000”. Other studies reference the \$100 million figure, and much of this economic activity occurs in the Charlottetown area.

According to Hill Strategies Inc., Prince Edward Islanders spent just over \$100 million on cultural goods and services in 2008, or 3.3% of total consumer spending in the province, *the highest such percentage among the provinces* and above the Canadian average of 2.9%. Hill Strategies also notes that the \$100 million Islanders spent on culture in 2008 is two-and-a-half times the \$42 million invested in culture by all levels of government on PEI. The arts are a sound cultural, societal, educational and economic investment. The Conference Board of Canada found that in 2007, cultural activities generated \$25 billion in revenue in our country, and that the cultural sector’s direct and indirect worth to the Canadian economy was \$84.6 billion. Our task force believes it is critical that the City play a strong leadership role in articulating and stressing the economic value of arts and culture to its other government partners, and to leaders of PEI’s tourism and business sectors. The statistics generated in the 2006 Iris Group study are important economic barometers, yet this data needs to be freshened and refined to reflect the growth and impact of the arts in Charlottetown during the past several years. The City should sponsor – and invite other partners to sponsor – a new

and comprehensive measurement of the economic impact of Charlottetown's cultural sector.

The arts serve to inspire, educate, provoke, entertain and enrich our community. They inform our values. They also scaffold our quality of life, a quality which assists governments, businesses and the tourism industry in bringing people and economic investment to Prince Edward Island. The City has an important role to play in refining and communicating these messages, and can become a *champion* for the arts as it engages other levels of government, other provincial and national partners, its citizens and its visitors. Arts and culture should permeate Charlottetown's brand, profile, strategic planning, policy decisions and all forms of its marketing. This is an opportunity for the City to wear culture as its identity and to serve as a catalyst in supporting those who *create* culture. As the important 150th anniversary of the meeting of the Fathers of Confederation in Charlottetown approaches, this is an excellent time for the City to cultivate a new era and legacy of artistic energy, imagination and innovation.

CHARLOTTETOWN'S ARTS AND CULTURE POLICY, 2006:

As part of its work in 2012, the Task Force reviewed the City of Charlottetown's Arts and Culture policy, shaped and written by members of a previous municipal task force on arts and culture, a subsequent sub-committee, and city staff in 2006.

Our Task Force acknowledges and supports the language and recommendations contained within the 2006 Arts and Culture Policy. These include references to the ongoing support and engagement of cultural organizations and events, the support of cultural facilities, the support of the creation and presentation of public art, ways to advance the recognition of culture, the preservation of heritage properties and the need to identify other sources of revenue to support the arts.

Our Task Force also notes, however, that some recommendations contained within the 2006 Arts and Culture policy do not appear to have been implemented. A few of these recommendations have resurfaced during our deliberations, have been modified or updated, and now appear in our own document, six years later. These recommendations include the call for an Arts and Culture Advisory Council, to engage the private sector in support of the arts, and to create an annual cultural awards program in Charlottetown.

We respectfully submit our 2012 recommendations to the City of Charlottetown's Mayor and Council with the hope that they are acted upon quickly, and given appropriate

emphasis, profile and attention by City staff and politicians. We do not wish for our recommendations to be unearthed and resurrected six years from now. We request their support and enactment in a timely and transparent manner.

A NEW ARTS AND CULTURE STRATEGY FOR THE CITY OF CHARLOTTETOWN:

As the City's Task Force refined its recommendations, a few consistent themes emerged in our discussions and research. We identified a need for arts and cultural programming and policy to be prominently and consistently supported within City Hall, and for Charlottetown staff and politicians to be regularly engaged in this process. We identified a need for the City to fully exploit its indoor and outdoor spaces and assets to further support artistic expression and activity, and recognized that the City can perform a role in encouraging other property owners to do the same. We explored ways in which the City can generate other sources of revenue to grow new funding programs for artists and arts organizations. We saw a need for Charlottetown's arts community to forge and strengthen ties with the business community, and examined ways in which the City can facilitate this relationship. The Task Force also examined ways in which Charlottetown can embed arts and culture within its promotional materials, through its online and print resources, and through all levels of its marketing initiatives.

We have focused our recommendations to revolve around ways in which the work of artists, artisans, curators, archivists, performers, storytellers and arts organizations can be best supported and exploited within the City and *by* the City in order to create an atmosphere of ongoing cultural expression, energy and vitality within Charlottetown.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force has separated its specific recommendations under four different categories:

1. City Hall: A Catalyst for Culture
2. Funding Programs and New Sources of Funding
3. Space and Properties
4. Marketing and Promotion

CITY HALL: A CATALYST FOR CULTURE

- 1.** The Task Force recommends the establishment of a Cultural Affairs Officer position at City Hall. Currently, no such position exists. We believe its creation within the municipal government is critical to ensuring that arts and culture have the attention of Charlottetown employees and politicians, and that arts-specific projects and programs – such as those recommended in this document – are pursued. The Task Force believes a Cultural Affairs Officer would ensure that the interests and goals of the City’s artists, artisans and creative community are being supported and heard by the City of Charlottetown. The Task Force has heard from several people within the arts and cultural sector who say the creation of this position would provide a vital link between themselves, their work, City Hall and the residents of Charlottetown. Some referenced how the establishment of a Cultural Capital of Canada coordinator job in 2011 (a temporary, one-year position tied to one-time Cultural Capital of Canada funding) greatly enhanced the communication between artists and the City, and helped artists connect to larger audiences and other project partners. A Cultural Affairs Officer would spearhead, refine, and/or support arts-specific programs, outreach and community engagement. This person would also ensure that our task force’s recommendations are prominently and consistently supported and enabled by City Hall.

- 2.** The Task Force recommends the formation of a permanent City of Charlottetown Arts and Culture Advisory Council. This council would continue the discussion and work initiated by our Task Force, and its members would be appointed by the City’s Mayor and Council. This group of volunteers would be comprised of members of Charlottetown’s arts, cultural, tourism, business and education communities, include professional artists, and involve representation of the City’s afore-mentioned Cultural Affairs Officer. It should also include representation from Charlottetown’s francophone community and The PEI Association of Newcomers to Canada to reflect the capital city’s growing diversity and multiculturalism. The ongoing responsibilities of an Arts and Culture Advisory Council would include:

 - a.** examining and reviewing the range of Charlottetown’s cultural activity and programming with community and economic impact in mind.
 - b.** reviewing the City’s arts funding and related initiatives so that arts and cultural services and programs are complementary and diverse in scope and appeal.
 - c.** ensuring the City is engaged in supporting – and sharing – the goals of the arts community.

- d. working to identify other sources of funding for the arts.
 - e. sharing and developing ideas on how to support and grow the City's arts and cultural sector.
 - f. designing and refining application criteria for City-funded arts programs, events and awards.
 - g. advising the City on its communication with, support for and development of its arts and cultural industries.
3. The Task Force recommends the City promote, organize and host – in concert with partners in the arts community – annual arts and culture awards. The objective would be to publicly recognize Charlottetown's cultural creators and producers, and also those who create, contribute to and support Charlottetown's arts, culture and heritage industries and institutions. The City has an important role to play in publicly recognizing and championing the arts, and the creation of a high-profile awards event serves this objective. The awards would also help to stimulate the public's awareness and appreciation of arts and culture in Charlottetown.
 4. The Task Force recommends the City work with the Greater Charlottetown Chamber of Commerce and culture sector partners to promote, organize and host an annual business/arts mixer. The objective of this event would be to enable artists and arts organizations to meet and network with potential partners, sponsors and collaborators from the business community. It would also allow business leaders to grow their awareness of the scope and breadth of artistic and cultural activity in Charlottetown, and to hear from others in the business community of the value of supporting or sponsoring the arts. We believe this dialogue is important in creating sponsorship opportunities for the arts.
 5. The Task Force recommends that whenever possible, any and all future City-commissioned art installations and sculptures feature the work of Prince Edward Island artists and artisans. Preference would be given to Island artists and artisans. However, if non-Island residents apply to and are successful with their submissions to City-sponsored requests-for-proposal, preference would be given to those artists working in collaboration with an Island artist.
 6. The Task Force recommends – and supports – The City of Charlottetown's continued efforts in securing a location and funding for a provincial museum within the Island capital, whether it is the identification of an existing location, or when funds permit, the construction of a new building.

FUNDING PROGRAMS (AND NEW SOURCES OF FUNDING)

- 7.** The Task Force recommends the City’s Arts and Culture Advisory Council establish, create eligibility and applicant criteria for and administer a Community Arts Fund which would directly support the production of Charlottetown-based arts and cultural activity, expression, exhibition and performance. The Community Arts Fund would provide financial support through three categories: project/activity funding, arts festival funding, and an “Open Projects” fund (see next recommendation for a detailed description of this specific initiative). The funds would be distributed through individual grants. The City would make a direct contribution to the Community Arts Fund, and it would annually seek funds from other potential sources to grow the total amount of funding available (other potential sources of funding could include the provincial government, the federal government, and/or private and corporate sector sponsors).
- 8.** As mentioned in recommendation 7, the Task Force recommends a branch of the Community Arts Fund be used to support a specific arts initiative in Charlottetown to encourage and empower artists, artisans and performers to maximize the use of the city’s open and vacant spaces throughout the provincial capital. Based on similar programs run previously in Halifax and Vancouver, an “Open Projects” funding program would invite artists, curators, designers, musicians, performers and arts groups to apply for funds so that they may – in the words of one Halifax “Open Projects” program – create “installations that identify and capitalize on opportunities to reimagine, remake and reinvigorate its civic spaces”. The theme of unused and unexploited physical space surfaced repeatedly during the Task Force’s deliberations, and in feedback from Charlottetown-area artists. We believe there is enormous potential in permitting artists to use public areas such as vacant lots, green spaces, civic and community centres, walls and streets to install, project, perform or exhibit their work. An “Open Projects” commission would ask artists to consider how they would use these public spaces to engage city residents and visitors.
- 9.** The Task Force recommends the City continue and grow its community “micro grants” sustainability program, so that arts-rooted initiatives and events in Charlottetown can continue to apply for funding support. The community micro-grants initiative was first launched in 2011, and we recommend the City further grow and promote this program to generate more arts and culture-related proposals.

- 10.** The Task Force recommends the City continue its in-kind and funding support of existing cultural infrastructure and assets including - but not limited to - facilities such as The Confederation Centre of the Arts and The Guild. We also recommend ongoing support for festivals that elevate public participation in and appreciation and awareness for the arts including - but not limited to - festivals and events such as The Charlottetown Festival, Art in the Open, the DiverseCity multicultural street festival and Culture Days.
- 11.** The Task Force recommends the City pursue and/or assist with the design and attraction of signature, world-class international festivals for Charlottetown. Cities such as Austin, Texas (South by Southwest Festival) and Edmonton (“Canada’s Festival City”) are positioning themselves as hubs for cultural activity. Charlottetown’s ability to attract a major cultural festival would serve the provincial capital’s ability and capacity to attract visitors, generate economic growth, create employment for the Island’s cultural workforce, and provide opportunities for local artists and performers to share stages and venues with world-class talent.

SOURCES OF FUNDING

- 12.** The Task Force recommends the City increase revenue for the funding of its arts and culture programs through the re-direction of a small percentage of Charlottetown’s hotel/motel room levy revenue. To illustrate the impact of the re-direction of a small percentage of the tourism levy to arts-specific funding, let’s consider that the tourism levy annually generates approximately \$700,000 in revenue for the City. If 10 per cent of this was further earmarked for arts and culture-related funding (through the City’s Special Events Reserve Fund), \$70,000 would be liberated for our City’s artists, artisans and performers to produce work which would engage Charlottetown’s residents, and inspire more people to visit. The Task Force suggests the City’s Arts and Culture Advisory Council (see recommendation 2) work to engage representatives from organizations such as Discover Charlottetown and The Hotel Association of PEI regarding the re-direction of a small percentage of the tourism levy.
- 13.** The Task Force recommends the City continue its policy of the “allocation of at least one per cent of [the value of] City of Charlottetown capital projects to the creation and installation of public art”. (This policy pertains to City-funded projects such as arenas or community centres).
- 14.** The Task Force recommends the City extend its one per cent capital project for public art allocation to include the construction and development of any

Charlottetown buildings funded by any level of government, such as schools, hospitals and government offices. We recommend the City communicate this initiative to other levels of government to encourage their participation and compliance.

- 15.** The Task Force recommends the City also incorporate large-scale commercial developments and projects into the capital project public art allocation program. Specifically, we recommend the City make it conditional for commercial developments with a value of \$1 million or higher to apply one-quarter of one per cent (0.25%) of the value of the development to City of Charlottetown arts funding. Revenue generated from this program would be earmarked for a special City fund, through which funding initiatives such as those outlined in recommendation number 7 would be supported.

SPACE AND PROPERTIES

- 16.** The Task Force believes empty and unoccupied buildings and storefronts do not make for an inspiring and vibrant Charlottetown. The Task Force recommends the City actively encourage and support requests from artists for the use of empty stores, offices, and buildings for rehearsal, performance or artistic creation. The City can serve as a broker in discussions involving property owners, developers and artists. We heard from one arts group which was interested in conducting open rehearsals in a vacant retail space within Confederation Court Mall, rehearsals that would be open to the public. We recommend the City facilitate meetings between property owners and artists and arts groups with a goal of forging alliances that result in the increased use of empty office or retail space for artistic purposes. We also recommend the City examine ways to offer incentives to those commercial property owners who re-purpose their empty buildings for artistic activity and expression. We encourage the City to work with the Prince Edward Island government to examine initiatives such as rebates or tax incentives that would help encourage building and property owners to seed artistic activity within their empty or unused premises.
- 17.** The Task Force recommends the City work with partners to create an Artists-in-Residence or Open Studio program in Charlottetown, so that more space for artistic creativity and innovation is made available and visible within Charlottetown. We recommend the City work to identify – and put out a call for the use of – buildings which may serve as appropriate residences or studio spaces. If a space can be secured for residency and/or workshop/studio use, artists from multiple disciplines would be encouraged to apply for its use. Again,

we encourage the City to examine ways in which easing property owners' tax burdens or designing other incentive program(s) to make the re-purposing of physical space for an Artists-in-Residence or Open Studio program an attractive option.

- 18.** The Task Force recommends the City grow its willingness, capacity for and creativity in showcasing and commissioning the creation of art in “unexpected” civic spaces, such as on lampposts, parking meters, manhole covers, fire hydrants and sidewalks. Creating an opportunity for arts and cultural expression to flourish on City-owned infrastructure and assets would inform Charlottetown residents and visitors that City Hall embraces and promotes culture everywhere. More art and creativity translate into a more visually appealing and vibrant cultural capital.
- 19.** The Task Force recommends the City continue to work with artists and arts groups to maximize the use of Charlottetown’s outdoor spaces (such as the four historic squares, Victoria Park and Confederation Landing) for cultural activity. We recommend the City make the increased, regular and carefully-managed use of Charlottetown’s outdoor spaces for cultural expression a priority.
- 20.** The Task Force recommends the City continue to commission the installation of permanent works of art in the downtown of Charlottetown, so that these future installations complement existing works such as the Sir John A. MacDonald statue, the “Bluefin Bullet” tuna creation on Queen Street, and the “Butcher Chairs” installation in Kings Square. With these continued commissions, the Task Force wishes for the creation of a cluster or corridor of public art in Charlottetown’s downtown. We recommend the City continue its support of the “Art in the City” public art installation and exhibition program.
- 21.** The Task Force recommends the City continue – and expand upon – its Heritage Incentive Program, and consider increasing the size of its grants for property owners who wish to restore and renovate heritage and historic properties as per the current terms of the program.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

- 22.** The Task Force recommends the City further embrace and assume the identity of a cultural capital or a cultural centre within its brand and all of its promotional tools, signage, and print and online resources. Culture should be Charlottetown’s brand, and culture should be Charlottetown’s marketing tool. The Task Force

believes that arts and culture serve to inspire citizen engagement and education, and that they also serve to invite people to visit and live in Charlottetown. Charlottetown should further embed and incorporate culture into its brand, and use this brand to invite visitors from across Canada and around the globe to the provincial capital. Culture and those who create it are the foundation of Charlottetown's precious quality of life, and this foundation should be embedded in any message the City creates to invite Islanders, tourists, newcomers and new businesses to come to Charlottetown.

- 23.** The Task Force recommends that the City actively liaise and work with organizations and entities such as the Tourism Industry Association of PEI, Tourism PEI, Discover Charlottetown and The Hotel Association of PEI to ensure that messaging pertaining to Charlottetown's arts and cultural sector is consistent and prominent within all tourism marketing campaigns and initiatives.
- 24.** The Task Force recommends the City display and promote its arts, cultural and heritage industries and activities more prominently on its website, and better integrate culture within its online messaging and resources. The City of Charlottetown's website is its digital storefront for use by residents and visitors. The City of Providence, Rhode Island pronounces itself as "The Creative Capital" on its home page, and has a robust arts and culture portal on its site. Philadelphia offers a VisitPhilly.com hub, which clearly and easily tells people where the city's art galleries, studios, theatres, music and cultural districts are. We think the City of Charlottetown should develop a clearer, more informative, and more engaging arts and cultural web portal, complete with – or a link to – an arts and cultural events calendar.
- 25.** The Task Force recommends the City provide visitors to its website with a more comprehensive listing or database of individual theatres, galleries, venues and studios.
- 26.** The Task Force recommends the City perform a more active and consistent role in promoting Charlottetown arts and cultural events, activities and programs through its social media platforms.
- 27.** The Task Force recommends the City also provide an online listing of arts and cultural groups, organizations for artists and artisans to access, and an online listing of community theatres, choirs, dance companies, photography clubs and other arts and heritage groups that Charlottetown residents can join.

- 28.** The Task Force recommends the City ensure that information pertaining to arts, cultural and heritage events, programming and infrastructure are prominently displayed and regularly updated in its online and print resources such as its Newcomers Guide and Parks and Recreation literature.
- 29.** The Task Force recommends the City promote the economic impact of its arts and cultural industries to other sectors, investors, employers and levels of government. As part of this promotional strategy, we recommend the City work with other partners to commission a study which examines and measures the impact of Charlottetown's (and PEI's) arts and cultural industries on its economy. The last time a comprehensive, arts-and-culture-specific economic impact study was done for Charlottetown was in 2006. The data yielded from such a study would provide fresh information for governments, the business sector, off-Island companies, PEI's arts community and its potential sponsors and partners about the economic value of the arts.