



Waterloo's Culture Plan: A Catalyst for Culture 2014-2024

Final Report



“It is obvious that people really care about Waterloo's future but with a view that things need some courage and innovation; an environment where creativity can be unleashed.”

– Local resident

Acknowledgements

Waterloo's culture plan is the result of two years of research and consultation involving many individuals and groups within the city. Residents and stakeholders have helped to shape the vision, guiding principles, goals and recommendations contained in this plan.

The economic development and community services departments, on behalf of the City of Waterloo, are thankful for the time, effort and dedication of all that have contributed to this initiative.

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Thank you to those most directly involved in the creation of Waterloo's culture plan, as represented in the following groups:

The **culture plan working group included:** Majdi Bou-Matar, MT Space; Alannah d'Ailly, Waterloo Public Library; Ashley Faulkner, University of Waterloo planning student; Heather Franklin, Waterloo Community Arts Centre; Tim Jackson, University of Waterloo; Bill Poole, advisory committee on culture (ACC) and the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery; Laura Lee Dam & Lyn Royce, Ministry of Tourism, culture & sport; Heather Sinclair, Creative Enterprise Initiative; and Steve Tulloch, grassroots community organizer.

The culture plan staff team included: Beth Rajnovich, policy & performance analyst; Amy Ross, policy & research analyst; Betty Anne Keller, manager, arts, culture, festival & events; Karen VandenBrink, manager, museum & archival collections and Jim Bowman, director, community programs & outreach.

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Executive Summary

The City of Waterloo is making cultural development a priority for this community. The goal is to make Waterloo more vibrant and an even better place to live, work, learn, and play.

For the past two years, community stakeholders and city staff have worked together to develop a municipal culture plan for the City of Waterloo. Public consultation provided the foundation on which the plan was built. More than 700 local residents provided input, which was combined with research on the current context of culture in Waterloo and leading practices in local cultural development from other communities. The vision, guiding principles, goals and recommendations for this plan are the result of that community engagement.

Objectives of the plan are to:

- define the community's vision for culture in Waterloo over the next 10 years;
- identify the city's role in supporting local cultural development to achieve the community's vision;
- establish strategic goals and recommended actions for the city to pursue to support the community's vision.

What is culture?

Defining culture is not easy. Some people may think of cultural activities such as painting, playing music, writing, performing in a play, dancing, playing a sport or gardening. Others may think of cultural spaces like theatres, music venues, galleries, museums, or parks, while others may think of culture in terms of traditions, customs, or celebrations. Most broadly culture can be defined as any form of human expression.

Culture can also be defined as the arts, culture, and heritage resources, practices and forms of expression that are valued, practiced, and preserved by the community. For many, culture comes alive when taking part in creativity, whether participating as an audience member, creator, consumer or patron, or when public spaces are vibrant and full of people. Culture shapes who we are and how we view the world. Culture is entwined into all aspects of daily life.

What is municipal culture planning?

Municipal culture planning is a local government-led process that focuses on supporting cultural development in the community. Municipal culture planning assists to strengthen and leverage existing cultural resources to help achieve community goals. Culture planning also aims to encourage consideration of culture in all facets of municipal government planning and decision-making, to help ensure that actions of local government contribute to building a vibrant cultural landscape. It is also helpful in facilitating local talent attraction and retention.

Culture planning is based on understanding local cultural assets, both tangible and intangible, strengths and opportunities, gaps and challenges. It is rooted in community engagement and the community's desires for local cultural development.

Many Canadian cities recognize that there are four pillars to a sustainable city:

- cultural vitality;
- economic prosperity;
- social equity; and
- environmental responsibility.

All of these pillars are important and each requires focused and dedicated attention by municipal governments and by the community as a whole. It is by recognizing the interconnections between these pillars, and balancing attention to each, that a vibrant community is sustained.

This municipal culture plan will provide a path forward and areas of focus for the city. By clearly defining the city's role in local cultural development it will focus efforts on initiatives that will have the most significant impact in the community, and help ensure city efforts are complimentary with those of other organizations in Waterloo.

Strategic Directions for the Future

The City of Waterloo's strategic focus is to strive to make Waterloo a better place to live, work, learn and play. In support of this overarching framework for the work of the city, this culture plan includes a vision and guiding principles for cultural development. This is followed by six goals to focus city efforts, and 37 recommendations that focus on actions the city can pursue to contribute to achieving the community's vision for culture.

Vision

The proposed vision for 2024 is:

Remaining true to our past, building on present strengths, and making the most of opportunities, Waterloo is a culturally transforming city – vibrant and resilient.

Culture is the heart of the community and collaboration is the starting point for civic engagement. The city has an artful public realm, where whimsy and spontaneity are encouraged, and public spaces are highly animated. The uptown is a cultural hub that has spilled over to enliven neighbourhoods throughout Waterloo. Intensification of the core has successfully balanced heritage with new architecture and streetscapes that foster interaction, are memorable and promote a local identity. The business and technology sectors recognize the mutual benefits of investing in a strong arts and culture scene and how it animates people on the street. The City of Waterloo and its staff are valued for facilitating a lively and rich urban experience in collaboration with culture workers, organizations, and regional stakeholders to allow creative pursuits to thrive. City decision-making and resource allocation demonstrates the central role culture plays in quality of life, social interaction, and community well-being. Waterloo is a city where culture workers of all kinds want to live and work, and where they feel appreciated for their contributions. Waterloo actively engages the full spectrum of residents in all aspects of the cultural community.

Guiding Principles

- We know future cultural development must be **authentic and true** to collective past and present realities;
- We see **vision, leadership, and commitment** as fundamental to encouraging culture to thrive;
- We recognize that empowering citizens to effect change is essential to **community and cultural development**;
- We strive to be **inclusive**, enabling all residents to engage in cultural pursuits;
- We understand that culture and heritage define individual and shared **identities** that shape the community;
- We believe that a **livable city** requires balanced attention to economic, environmental, social, and cultural strategic priorities;
- We value **creativity and risk-taking** as essential to innovation and progress.

The City's Future Role in Local Cultural Development

This culture plan proposes that the primary role of the City of Waterloo in local cultural development is to act as a catalyst for culture.

In chemistry, a catalyst is a substance that causes or accelerates a chemical reaction. A catalyst can also be defined as something that triggers an event or change, or a person whose enthusiasm or energy causes others to be more enthusiastic and energetic.

What does it mean for the Corporation of the City of Waterloo and its staff to act as a catalyst for local cultural development?

It means that the work the city is currently doing through the city museum and collections, festival and events, public art, city-owned buildings, development approvals, and in many other areas should continue, but enhancement should be pursued, and a new, corporate-wide philosophy about culture should be embraced.

The city does not need to develop cultural content. That talent already exists within the community. Rather the city must embrace responsibility for creating an enabling environment where the community's cultural vision can be achieved.

The city's role should involve:

- championing the community's vision for culture;
- promoting the connections between community development, economic development and quality of life;
- providing funding, in-kind support, and space for culture to transpire;
- networking, relationship building, and collaboration within the culture sector and across other sectors;
- acting as a conduit for information;
- breaking down barriers to cultural activities and engagement at the city and within the community;
- connecting the dots – identifying opportunities and bringing ideas, people, and resources together to help make great things happen;
- encouraging creativity and creative expression in all areas of community life;



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- collaborating with complementary organizations such as the Creative Enterprise Initiative, the UpTown BIA, Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation and other local governments;
- celebrating local cultural accomplishments and the value of “art for art’s sake”.

The new role of the city with regards to culture offers great potential for the continued prosperity of the community.

Goals and Recommendations

To achieve the community’s vision for culture, six goals and 37 recommendations were identified by the working group.

The goals reflect the key themes that emerged during the public consultation process. Goal 1 was identified as most important by the community, and following that goals 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 were deemed of equal importance.

The recommendations are intended to support overall progress towards each goal. While all of the recommendations included in this plan were deemed appropriate responses to priority issues and needs within the community, some recommendations have been identified with a symbol (**) to denote high priority, based on community feedback.

Goal 1: Uncover and build community capacity for creativity, expression and cultural engagement.

- **1.1 Institute a culture policy for the City of Waterloo that reflects the community’s vision.
- **1.2 Explore strategies to support the addition of an arts & culture coordinator position in the arts, culture, festivals & events unit.
- **1.3 Develop a municipal cultural investment strategy with a range of funding and support types.
- 1.4 Increase the City of Waterloo’s capacity to support collaborative festivals and events.
- 1.5 Review existing bylaws, permits, guidelines and associated processes with a view to considering broad community values and allowing for cultural vibrancy.
- 1.6 Explore innovative ways to integrate and fund city-supported cultural activities and assets.
- 1.7 Undertake a study of the space needs for culture workers and cultural activities, and identify innovative, cost effective approaches to better meet local space needs.

Goal 2: Strengthen the community’s cultural heritage identity by uniting Waterloo’s past with its present and future through management and education.

- **2.1 Develop a strategy for built heritage, supported by a permanent heritage planner position.
- **2.2 Develop a strategy that encompasses growth and long-term management for the City of Waterloo Museum & archival collections.
- 2.3 Increase programming capacity to recognize heritage as a strong educational component of culture.

- 2.4 Digitize the city's heritage collections to provide online access.
- 2.5 Continue development of the series of provincial standards for community museums to support the City of Waterloo Museum.
- 2.6 Identify and designate local cultural heritage landscapes as a part of the city's place-making approach to city building.

Goal 3: Enliven streets, neighbourhoods, public and green spaces.

- **3.1 Develop a neighbourhood strategy that explores opportunities to create a distinct sense of identity and culture at a neighbourhood level.
- **3.2 Develop a list of desired cultural assets and the preferred locations to assist with long-term planning when processing development applications under the Planning Act.
- **3.3 Continue to make progress on place-making initiatives in the uptown core.
- **3.4 Plan for and continue to invest in the development of the Waterloo Public Square over the long term.
- **3.5 Develop a joint initiative to explore the potential for temporary use of empty retail spaces in the uptown as spaces for cultural expression and animation.
- 3.6 Develop a public art program.
- 3.7 Establish a municipal artist-in-residence program.
- 3.8 Involve regional artists, wherever possible, in the design of public infrastructure projects to incorporate artistic elements into the heritage of the future.

Goal 4: Enhance engagement of community diversity to build a stronger, shared sense of belonging.

- **4.1 Develop a diversity strategy.
- **4.2 Initiate a community-driven, multicultural event focusing on performance and arts with an accompanying symposium.
- **4.3 Work closely with post-secondary institutions and associated stakeholders to break down barriers between campuses and the community.
- **4.4 Work closely with youth and youth service providers to develop meaningful opportunities for youth-focused cultural experiences.
- 4.5 Investigate opportunities to expand the city's fee assistance leisure access program for access to a broader range of cultural activities.
- 4.6 Work with Aboriginal stakeholders to share Aboriginal culture and heritage with the broader community.
- 4.7 Explore strategies to provide for a diversity coordinator in the community programs & outreach division.
- 4.8 Identify funding to ensure the Button Factory, a significant heritage building and cultural institution in Waterloo, meets the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

Goal 5: Expand community awareness and appreciation of culture.

- **5.1 Promote local culture to residents.
- **5.2 Promote Waterloo's local cultural assets and strengths as tools to attract and retain global interest.

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- 5.3 Elevate the profile of the arts, culture, festivals and events division and its staff within the corporation and within the community.

Goal 6: Foster collaborations in the culture sector.

- **6.1 Pursue opportunities to build relationships and partnerships between the culture sector and other sectors, with a focus on funding and support.
- **6.2 Initiate discussions with leaders of educational and research facilities containing performing arts venues to find ways to improve community access and foster community use.
- 6.3 Organize and host a bi-annual cultural summit.
- 6.4 Initiate a regional conversation about the need for a Community Arts Council.
- 6.5 Continue to support the goals of the Waterloo Community Arts Centre and the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery.

Implementation Plan

The culture plan provides direction for moving forward and a focal point for the momentum generated during this project. Taking action is the next step.

Some elements of the plan are easily achievable in the short-term. Others will take longer. This is a 10-year plan; it is understood that time is needed to make the recommended changes and to see the impact of those changes in the community. The cultural horizon is constantly changing and innovation, flexibility and risk-taking will be needed to achieve the community’s vision for culture.

The following summary outlines the distribution of recommendations according to the corporate lead, proposed implementation timeline and financial considerations.

Corporate lead	Total recommendations
Community services department	11
Corporate services department	1
Economic development department	22
Integrated planning & public works department	3

Implementation timelines	Total recommendations
Short-term (1-3 years)	24 [∞]
Medium-term (4-6 years)	10
Long-term (7-10 years)	3

Financial considerations	Total recommendations
Existing resources	19 ^{∞∞}
New funding – one time	3
New funding – continuous	15

[∞]Eight of the recommendations are identified for implementation over the short-term (years 1-3 years) to medium-term (years 4-6) or short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10), recognizing that implementation will involve a multi-phased approach.



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∞∞ Three of the recommendations identified as existing resources will also require additional funding for full implementation. In these cases, existing resources will allow for partial implementation.

A change in the focus and priorities of the Corporation of the City of Waterloo will be critical to successful implementation of the plan. Cross-departmental synergy, embracing the city's role as a catalyst for culture, and applying a cultural lens will support decision-making that positively impacts the local culture environment.

Establishing an internal cross-departmental staff committee that will act as champions to collaboratively carry out implementation is a critical next step to making this plan come to life.

The culture plan should be widely communicated both internally across all departments at the city and throughout the community to help develop greater understanding of the city's role in supporting local cultural development. Communication about the plan should also focus on continuing to build stakeholder engagement and identifying opportunities for collaboration to support implementation of the plan. Regular reports to council and the community on implementation progress, successes and challenges will help sustain momentum.

1. Introduction

The City of Waterloo is making cultural development a priority for this community. The goal is to make Waterloo more vibrant and an even better place to live, work, learn, and play.

City strategies and plans have drawn attention to the importance of culture in recent years. The City of Waterloo's economic development strategy (2008) identified the importance of culture and the creation of vibrant, creative and engaging community amenities for a strong local economy. The City of Waterloo's recreation and leisure master plan (2008) identified the need to develop a culture plan. During public consultation for the recreation and leisure services master plan residents indicated that culture in Waterloo is underdeveloped and underappreciated. The official plan (2012) includes policy that speaks to how the city will fulfill its role in terms of planning for the provision of arts, cultural, heritage, recreation and leisure facilities, services and programs and the conservation of cultural heritage resources. These and other city plans and strategies have drawn attention to the need for more focused planning around the city's role in local cultural development.

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What is culture?

Defining culture is not easy. Some people may think of cultural activities such as painting, playing music, writing, performing in a play, dancing, playing a sport, or gardening. Others may think of cultural spaces like theatres, music venues, galleries, museums, or parks, while others may think of culture in terms of traditions, customs, or celebrations. Most broadly culture can be defined as any form of human expression.

Culture can also be defined as the arts, culture, and heritage resources, practices and forms of expression that are valued, practiced, and preserved by the community.

For many, culture comes alive when taking part in creativity, whether participating as an audience member, creator, consumer or patron, or when public spaces are vibrant and full of people. Culture shapes who we are and how we view the world. Culture is entwined into all aspects of daily life.

Figure 1.0 Forms of Culture



What is municipal culture planning?

Municipal culture planning is a local government-led process that focuses on how to support cultural development in the community. Municipal culture planning assists to strengthen and leverage existing cultural resources to help achieve community goals. Culture planning aims to encourage consideration of culture in all facets of municipal government planning and decision-making, to help ensure that actions of local government contribute to building a vibrant cultural landscape. It is also helpful in facilitating local talent attraction and retention.

Culture planning is based on understanding local cultural assets, both tangible and intangible, strengths and opportunities, gaps and challenges. It is rooted in community engagement and the community's desires for local cultural development.

Why does the City of Waterloo need a culture plan?

Culture planning has a proven track record. Cities in Ontario and around the world have developed culture plans and are seeing the positive results of putting the plan into action.

Culture plans can support:

- **Economic prosperity**

Jane Jacobs, an urban writer and activist, defined cities as "places that produce wealth".¹ Attracting and retaining workers and entrepreneurs is critical to supporting a flourishing city. People want to live where there is vibrant culture. As a result, employers looking to attract and retain employees locate in cities with a vibrant cultural scene. A culture plan can contribute to making the city more vibrant and attractive to both employees and employers. Investment in local culture translates into investment in the local economy. Cities with vibrant culture also attract tourists and benefit from visitor spending.

- **Community cohesion**

Culture can contribute to making a city a great place to live, to community pride, and to the development of a shared sense of community identity. Culture is a way to express ideas and experiences, as well as communicate with others. As this community continues to change and grow in diversity, culture can be a way to learn about each other and find common ground. A culture plan can help identify ways to leverage culture to support community development.

- **Enhancing creativity**

Cultural activities help to develop creativity. Creativity for some is developed through quilting, writing, gardening, playing music or cooking a new recipe during leisure time. For others creativity is central to their profession as an artist, writer, filmmaker, musician, graphic designer, or performer. Whatever the approach, cultural activities provide opportunities to flex creative muscles. Developing capacity for creativity through culture can spill over into other endeavors. A creative spirit can lead not only to great works of art, but also to breakthroughs in scientific research or new technologies. It is this type of creativity that drives economic growth in today's world. A culture plan can identify ways to increase opportunities for all residents to develop their creative capacity.

- **Celebrating heritage**

One of the greatest resources Waterloo has is its heritage. This includes heritage buildings, but also artifacts, natural heritage, and local oral and written history. Heritage contributes to a sense of place and identity. A culture plan can identify what parts of heritage are important to conserve, how heritage stories can be shared and celebrated, and how heritage can contribute to community building and to shaping the future.

- **Making the most of existing culture resources**

Waterloo has a diverse cultural landscape featuring a wide variety of performance spaces, galleries and museums; a heritage district, a popular public square, local independent restaurants and retail ventures, a growing public art collection; classes, lessons and clubs for a wide variety of cultural activities; three well-regarded post-secondary institutions; a variety of festivals throughout the year, and much more.

¹ Jacobs, J. *The Economy of Cities*. (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1970)

However, residents have indicated that culture is underdeveloped and undervalued in Waterloo. Local cultural resources have not been leveraged to their full potential, be it talent, spaces, or other resources that can contribute to a vibrant community. The culture plan looks for ways the city can contribute to local cultural development and realize the full potential of the community's cultural assets.

- **Recognizing culture as a pillar of sustainability**

Many Canadian cities recognize that there are four pillars to a sustainable city: economic prosperity, social equity, environmental responsibility, and cultural vitality. All of these pillars are important and each requires focused and dedicated attention by municipal government and by the community as a whole. It is by recognizing the interconnections between these pillars, and balancing attention to each, that a vibrant community is sustained.



While the economic, environmental, and social pillars have more commonly received greater focus by municipal and regional governments, the need to focus on culture as part of sustainability is a more recent practice that has shown success in improving quality of life within cities. The four-pillar approach to sustainable development recognizes that quality of life is related to the quality of cultural engagement in the community. Culture is a tool that

can help to achieve community goals related to the local economy, the built or natural environment, and community development.

In recent years, the interconnections between cultural vitality and economic prosperity have received significant attention. Vibrant and engaging public spaces and access to a diverse range of high quality cultural and entertainment options are essential to attracting and retaining highly talented, creative people to a community. These talented people, often called the “creative class²”, are globally mobile. They are increasingly influencing where employers choose to be located. Wherever they choose to live, they contribute to generating significant wealth within the community through the growth of the knowledge-based economy. Communities that put a focus on attracting and retaining the creative class and knowledge-based employers have been found to have greater economic prosperity and to be more resilient in the face of economic challenges.

2. Culture Plan Development Process

Work on the culture plan started in fall of 2011, after the City of Waterloo received a grant from the Government of Ontario's Creative Communities Prosperity Fund.

The culture plan project is rooted in:

- a commitment to broad public engagement;
- an inclusive and holistic definition of culture;
- the assumption that culture is one of four pillars of a sustainable city and that culture contributes to economic and community prosperity;
- a belief that the municipal government in Waterloo has an important role to play in supporting local cultural development, alongside many other institutions, organizations and individuals, that can help to achieve the community's vision for culture.

The culture plan focuses on identifying the community's vision for culture, defining the role the city should play in supporting local cultural development over the next 10 years, and the development of goals and recommended actions to achieve the desired progress.

This municipal culture plan provides a path forward. By clearly defining the city's role in local cultural development, the plan will focus efforts on initiatives that will have the most significant impact in the community, and help ensure city efforts are complimentary with those of other organizations in Waterloo with a focus on cultural development.

Development of the City of Waterloo's culture plan has drawn on the success of culture planning projects of other cities in Ontario like London, Markham, Oakville, Mississauga, Barrie, St. Catharines and Vaughan. Organizations like Municipal Culture Planning Inc. and the Creative City Network of Canada have developed valuable research and resources that helped inform the development of this plan.

² Florida, R. *The Rise of the Creative Class: And how It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2002).

Many communities start culture planning with a culture mapping exercise. Cultural mapping is a systematic approach to identifying and recording a municipality's cultural resources and assets, often using Geographic Information Systems (GIS), to better understand local cultural systems and trends. Waterloo completed a culture-mapping project in 2007. The inventory was used to inform early culture plan discussions about local cultural resources and assets. That work was a good start, but it was identified that the inventory needed to be updated and kept up to date in order to remain most useful for planning purposes. This work is already underway – city staff are collaborating with the Creative Enterprise Initiative (CEI) to support growth of the cultural database behind grandsocial.ca, with the understanding that the information will also be accessible for city planning purposes.

The culture plan project unfolded in five main steps:

Step 1 - Background research: November 2011 to August 2012

During this first phase of the project, research was completed to support development of the plan. This included the examination of:

- the city's current role in culture;
- existing strategic plans, such as the official plan, the city's strategic plan, and the economic development strategy and the recreation and leisure services master plan, to ensure alignment;
- the current state of local culture, including strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats;
- local demographic information;
- leading practices from other municipalities.

During this phase, a working group was formed to collaborate with project staff to develop the culture plan. The working group was made up of local cultural organization leaders, community members, and staff from multiple city departments. A complete list of the working group members and project staff can be found in the acknowledgements on page 2.

The research gathered by staff was shared with the culture plan working group, as well as the citizens' or culture sector roundtables. The roundtables were comprised of community members and met monthly over a period of five to six months. The focus of these groups was in-depth discussion and analysis of the information gathered during this phase of the project and on development of a more complete picture of the current cultural context in Waterloo. These early discussions and analysis provided a foundation for the plan.

A list of the background research reports and supporting documents developed during the course of the culture plan project is available in appendix A.

Step 2 – Phase one public consultation: September to December 2012

With foundational background research completed, a series of public consultation sessions were held throughout the fall of 2012. This first phase of consultation started at Fair in the Square, a community event held in the Waterloo Public Square in September, featuring a broad range of local cultural talent and a community art project. This phase of consultation culminated at the culture plan summit in November, which included focus group sessions and a discussion

guide, available online and on paper, to gather input to inform the plan. Particular focus was given to ensuring residents of a broad range of ages, ethnicities, geographic locations, and so forth, had an opportunity to participate in public consultation. Opportunities for post-secondary institutions, business leaders, neighbourhood associations, and council advisory committees were also facilitated. Multiple input sessions were also held with city staff to encourage corporate-wide support for the project. More than 700 local residents contributed ideas during phase one of public consultation. A full list of public consultations for this project is included in appendix B.

Step 3 - Developing a draft culture plan: January to July 2013

Following the first phase of public consultation, the working group, supported by staff, reviewed and analyzed the input collected.

A rigorous process was used to synthesize the input and identify common themes, issues and ideas.

The working group used this information to develop a proposed role for the City of Waterloo in supporting local cultural development, and a draft vision, guiding principles, goals and recommendations.

The working group's efforts were shaped by the recognition that city resources are limited and that the culture plan should focus on using existing resources for the best community outcome. The working group also recognized that although identifying the city's role in supporting culture is important, the community's vision could only be achieved with support, participation and collaboration from a wide variety of community stakeholders.

The result was a draft culture plan that was presented to council in July 2013. Council approved a second phase of public consultation to gather feedback on the draft culture plan.

Step 4 – Phase two public consultation: September to October 2013

The second phase of public consultation provided the community with the opportunity to comment on the vision, guiding principles, goals, and recommendations in the plan. This phase involved an online survey and two culture plan social workshops. This phase of consultation focused on making sure the culture plan reflected the values, needs and opportunities identified by the community, and on gathering input on priority recommendations.

Step 5 – Finalizing the plan: October to December 2013

The working group, with the support of staff, revised the culture plan based on community feedback. Community priorities were identified and an implementation plan developed. The final culture plan report was brought to council for approval in December 2013.

3. The Waterloo Context

Developing a culture plan for Waterloo required an examination of the city's current context to ensure that the plan:

- is authentic to the community;
- leverages community assets; and
- is responsive to the changing nature of the community.

This contextual analysis included looking at the city's past, present, and anticipated future. Linked to this was a review of City of Waterloo strategic plans, the political and geographical location of the city, and the current role the city plays in supporting culture.

- **Waterloo's Past**

When residents reflect on Waterloo's heritage, they naturally make connections to culture in the city today.

Oktoberfest celebrations are a reminder of the German influence that helped establish this community. Making a trip to the uptown market held in the Waterloo Public Square, is a reminder of local agrarian roots, which are now recognized in the recent local development of Canada's Technology For Food initiative.

The development on the Barrel Yards (former Canadian Barrel site), the adaptive re-use of the Seagram lofts and Bauer industries, and the City of Waterloo's heritage collections reflect the important role distilleries and manufacturing played in the local economy. The Button Factory building, home to the Waterloo Community Arts Centre, is another reminder of local manufacturing roots and how our heritage can be re-imagined as we move forward.

Three strong post-secondary institutions speak to the community's long time love of learning and innovation, and have kept the Waterloo brand on the international radar. Waterloo is well known as being a "barn-raising" community. This reflects the city's Mennonite heritage and local ability to come together to build community, the economy, and to support each other. There are many other ways that our heritage, both in the distant and more recent past, have shaped contemporary Waterloo, and it is by exploring these connections that community identity and strengths can be identified.

- **Waterloo Today**

A culture plan needs to reflect the community's history, but also the current environment. A demographic profile of Waterloo tells us that:

- Residents of Waterloo are highly educated. 55.49 per cent of the population has some kind of post-secondary education, compared to Ontario as whole at 50.99 per cent.³
- There are currently 55,970 full-time students enrolled in the three post-secondary institutions with campuses in Waterloo and elsewhere.⁴ The majority of these students reside in Waterloo.

³ Statistics Canada, 2006 Adjusted Census via Environics Analytics



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- Waterloo is a wealthy community. 30.2 per cent of households have income over \$100,000, in comparison to 24.0 per cent in Ontario. There are, however, still many lower-income households in Waterloo.⁵
- 16.94 per cent of the city's population self-identify as a visible minority, with Chinese and South Asian being the most commonly reported visible minorities.⁶
- 25 per cent of the city's population are immigrants⁷
- Waterloo Region has a lower percentage of residents employed in cultural industries compared to Ontario or Canada.⁸

- **Alignment with Other City Plans**

One of the most important goals of a culture plan is to encourage consideration of culture in all city planning and decision-making. This means that the connections between the culture plan, other city plans, and other relevant cross-jurisdictional plans need to be established. Many of the plans developed and approved in recent years indicate some consideration of culture. The addition of a section on arts, culture, heritage and recreation and leisure in the latest City of Waterloo official plan is an example of the increasing recognition of culture's importance to city-building.

In turn, the culture plan can help support the goals of other corporate strategies, specifically the economic development strategy which identified culture as important to community cohesion. Ensuring alignment amongst these plans will support a common path moving forward for the city and identification of areas of mutual benefit for further exploration.

⁴ Laurier Centre for Economic Research and Policy Analysis, 2013.

⁵ Statistics Canada, 2006 Adjusted Census via Environics Analytics

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Kitchener-Waterloo Community Foundation. (2013). Waterloo Region's Vital Signs.

⁸ Kitchener-Waterloo Community Foundation. (2013). Waterloo Region's Vital Signs.

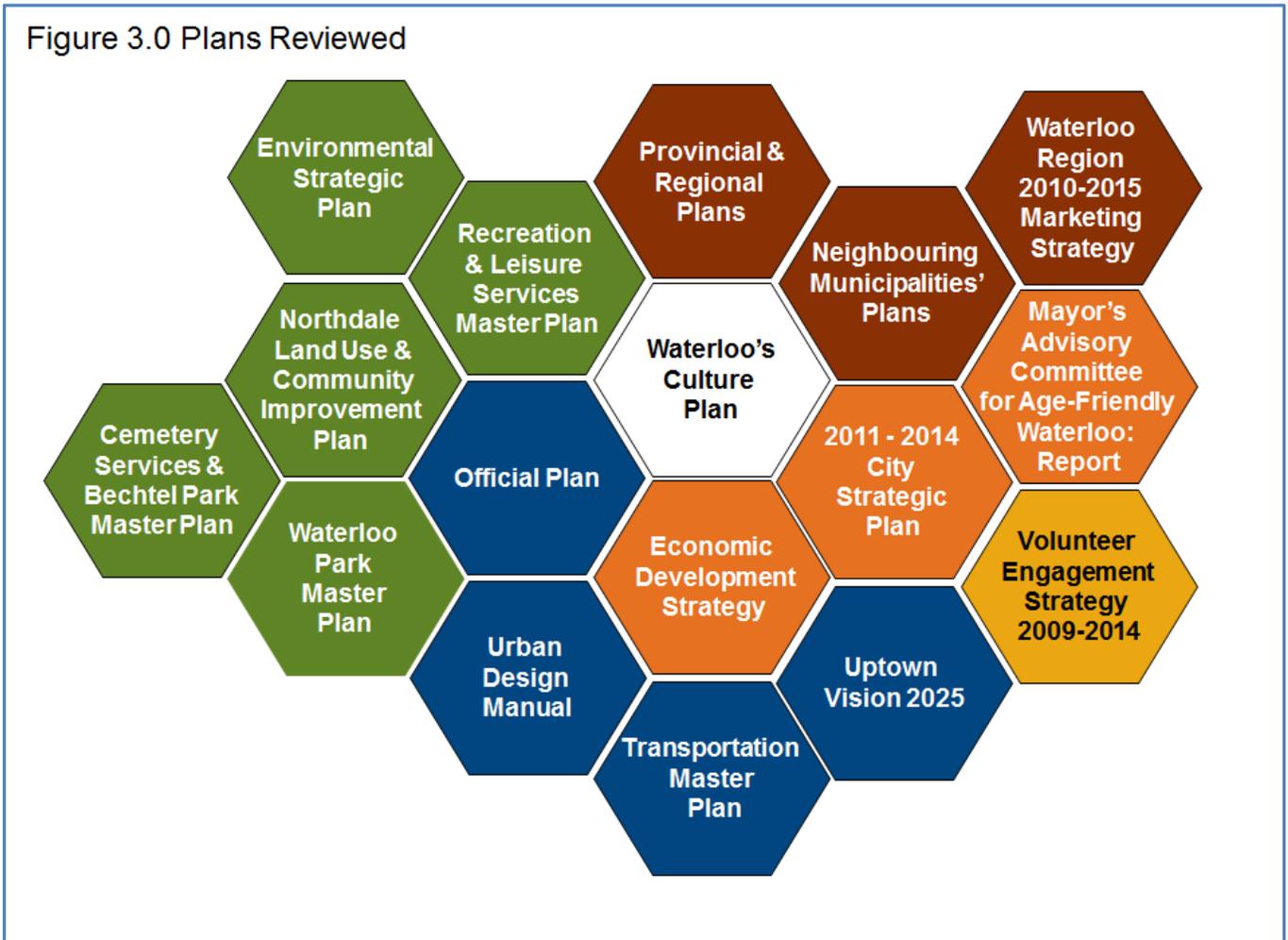


Figure 3.0 illustrates the plans and strategies considered during the development of the culture plan. It visually represents the close-knit ties among plans, strategies and policies from various sources. The most influential are depicted as touching the culture plan, with others working outwards.

In addition to the consideration of these plans and strategies, existing city policies, such as the service delivery policy, and the City of Waterloo healthy community decision-making lens developed by the safe and healthy community advisory committee, have helped to shape the recommendations in this plan.

As implementation of the culture plan moves forward, consideration must also be given to new city plans that are developed such as the built heritage strategy and the neighbourhood strategy recommended in this plan (see recommendations 2.1 and 3.1 respectively), as well as to the strategic plans of stakeholders, such as the Waterloo Public Library's new strategic plan, to support alignment and identify opportunities to work together toward common goals.

- **Geographic and Political Context**

Waterloo's geographic and political location within the Region of Waterloo influences the cultural context of the city. Residents noted that engagement in cultural activities is not influenced by the political boundaries that divide the region into municipalities. Waterloo residents take part in cultural opportunities throughout the region and beyond. Following this, cultural assets need to be considered using a region-wide lens. Cultural spaces and assets in Kitchener, such as the Centre in the Square and the Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery are prime examples. While physically located in Kitchener, they serve the residents of Waterloo and are important for the City of Waterloo and its residents to support.

Like the City of Waterloo, the regional government and neighbouring municipal governments also play a role in supporting cultural development. Residents are keen to see the City of Waterloo work more closely with regional partners, particularly with the City of Kitchener, to support local culture and shared events. There was a strong indication that greater progress could be made through a collaborative approach and alignment of priorities. City staff have engaged Kitchener and Region of Waterloo staff throughout the development of this plan. Key opportunities for future collaboration have been identified in the plan and can expand over time.

The Creative Enterprise Initiative (CEI) is also an important consideration when looking at the context of culture in Waterloo, particularly when considering how the City of Waterloo should contribute to supporting local culture within the region. The CEI was established in 2010 as a result of five years of community research that informed the Prosperity Council of Waterloo Region's plan.

The CEI contributes to local culture through facilitation and setting the stage for creative enterprise to be successful, self-sufficient and thriving. It operates a number of programs and services including:

- region-wide marketing and promotion;
- mentoring and training;
- supporting talent attraction and retention;
- access to benefits for culture workers in collaboration with the Greater Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce;
- low-cost studio space;
- a cultural investment program; and
- grandsocial.ca - an online portal of cultural happenings, assets and resources throughout Waterloo Region.

The CEI receives funding from the City of Waterloo and other local governments to support its activities. It was identified early in the development of this plan that it is important for the City of Waterloo's role to be different from, but complementary to, the role of the CEI. Engagement of CEI staff in the development of this plan has helped to avoid duplication and identify opportunities for collaboration. Themes that emerged during the consultation process that fall within the CEI's mandate have been directed to the CEI for consideration.

Waterloo's location, a 75-minute drive from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), also influences the cultural landscape. Waterloo's technology sector and other knowledge economy employers attract daily commuters from Milton, Mississauga, Toronto and other areas of the GTA. Similarly, local residents often travel into the GTA to take part in cultural activities such as theatre, museums, galleries, concerts, or professional sports. Culture workers that live in Waterloo also indicate that they travel frequently to the GTA to pursue work opportunities not available locally.

- **Looking Forward**

The culture plan mandate is to be forward thinking. There are a number of changes on the horizon that might alter the cultural landscape of Waterloo during the course of this 10-year plan. Being aware of the potential impacts is vital to the plan. Examples include:

- The development of light rail transit (LRT) in the region. This will change the way people move about the city, and creates the potential for the development of a concentration of culture around station areas. Linked to this transportation system are future opportunities to support two-way GO Transit Service from Toronto to Waterloo Region.
- Post-secondary institutions continue to grow, and are the birthplace of innovation that could radically change the local economy.
- Changes are underway at Waterloo Park, a cultural gem; the redevelopment will make the park more amendable to the needs of the changing population.
- The city will continue to grow, however, instead of growing out, it is growing up – intensification will continue, particularly in the uptown core, around LRT stops and on city-owned lands.
- Along with the changing built environment, community demographics are expected to continue to shift. The population will get older and more ethnically diverse.

Looking toward the impact of future changes has been an important point of consideration in the development of this plan. These changes present opportunities that will benefit the community. The challenge is to remain responsive and flexible as changes inevitably occur throughout plan implementation

4. The City's Current Role in Local Cultural Development

The City of Waterloo has played a longstanding role in contributing to culture in this city and in the region. The city is one of many stakeholders that support local culture. The current role of the city includes direct service provision, facilitation and support, funding, and a range of other indirect and in-kind supports that involve all city departments.

While all departments contribute to the city's role in culture, primary responsibility for culture falls within the arts, culture, festival and events unit, recently relocated to the economic development department and the museum and collections unit in the community services department.

Arts, culture, festivals & events unit, economic development department

The purpose of this unit is to:

- facilitate municipal cultural services and events in collaboration with community resources;
- facilitate/host events;
- provide staff support and other resources for community cultural development support;
- foster collaboration and partnership opportunities among groups, and between the city and the community;
- promote and encourage participation in cultural activity for all ages.

Currently, there are three staff in this unit, with additional support via student workers during the prime festival season, as budgets allow.

Manager, arts, culture, festivals & events unit

In addition to managing staff, the manager has been focused on working with community service delivery partners to promote arts, culture, festivals and event opportunities across the local community. The manager works to integrate an arts and culture focus into city programs, services and facilities and broadly advocates for the value and importance of arts and culture within the local community. The manager acts as a resource to internal and external customers on arts and culture matters. The role also participates in the development of municipal plans and policies related to the unit's mandate. The manager is the staff liaison, providing leadership and administrative support, to council's advisory committee on culture and related sub-committees, such as the public art subcommittee. The manager is also responsible for maintaining and enhancing the public art collection (17 works) and fine art collection (more than 100 works).

Coordinator, festivals & events

This individual organizes the resources and leadership required for the year-round delivery of outdoor festivals and events. This typically includes coordinating vendor needs, developing timely marketing, monitoring budgets, coordinating volunteers as well as suppliers and service providers, developing and maintaining sponsorship relationships and operational site requirements. This position also interacts heavily with other departments within the city such as public works, information systems, clerks, traffic, water services and finance. Externally, this position liaises with the Region of Waterloo health unit and water services as well as the UpTown Business Improvement Area (BIA).

Programmer, public square & open spaces

The programmer coordinates the resources and leadership required for the delivery of programs and services that take place within the public square and other open spaces. The workload for the public square currently keeps this staff member occupied full-time. As a result, little staff time is directed to programming in other open spaces in the city. During warmer months, from May to October, this role focuses on logistical issues, and is required to be present at the public square on weekdays and weekends to successfully manage the many events hosted at this location. Winter months are focused on planning the programming for the upcoming year. Additional programming and events are needed to support expanding population, as well as, to attract more visitors to our uptown.

Temporary event support workers are typically accessed during spring and summer months. These positions have been targeted at post-secondary students. These additional event staff support the coordinator and programmer to facilitate the current complement of festivals and events.

Museum & archival collections unit, community services department:

This unit provides a variety of heritage services to the public in the form of:

- resources for artifact preservation advice and identification;
- a portal to the past on the City of Waterloo’s website;
- technical research bulletins;
- walking tours;
- family friendly hands-on programming;
- temporary displays at city facilities featuring the heritage collection;
- cooperation with community organizations to develop our local history;
- historic referencing;
- conserving community and municipal heritage resources;
- presenting and exhibiting the city’s heritage artifact collections;
- developing heritage education programs.

These activities increase awareness and appreciation of municipal and community history as a means of generating community pride and improving the quality of life for all citizens.

Currently, the city’s heritage collection, of approximately 10,000 objects, is comprised of:

- artifacts from the former Seagram Plant;
- a collection related to the municipal history of Waterloo;
- a collection from the Elam Martin Farmstead located at RIM Park;
- industrial artifacts; and
- fine art collection not on display

There is one full-time and two part-time staff in the museum and archival collections unit.

Manager, museum & archival collections

This individual ensures the efficient and effective delivery of heritage programs and services for the City of Waterloo. The manager provides professional curatorial expertise to manage the city’s heritage collections and operation of the City Museum, which puts on four exhibits per year. Curation of exhibits and collaboration with local and provincial heritage organizations are also primary functions of this role. The manager participates as a co-liaison to the advisory committee on culture and actively participates in local museum and gallery initiatives to promote Waterloo’s history.

Currently the Manager, Museums and Collections works with the Municipal Heritage Committee, a Committee of Council mandated by the province and comprised of Waterloo citizens. The committee meets monthly to advise Council on the preservation of properties of architectural and historical significance and to implement awareness programs concerning the preservation of Waterloo’s heritage and architecture through the Ontario Heritage Act.

The staff liaison for this committee is anticipated to transfer to the new heritage planner position in the growth management unit of the integrated planning and public works department. This role is a new two-year contract to support built heritage planning and is responsible for providing a heritage-focused perspective and expertise related to the city's land-use planning and community design functions in order to support the city's legislated heritage obligations. This role will review, comment and make recommendations on the designation of properties and districts, review the city's municipal heritage register process, review basic and moderately complex heritage permit applications, assist with special studies and policy reviews, and provide professional planning advice to the public and development industry on heritage related matters. This new position marks an important investment in Waterloo's heritage by the city.

Specialist, heritage

The specialist delivers heritage related programs and services, assists with the management of the heritage collection and supervises volunteers. This was funded as a part-time contract position until June 2012 when a regular part-time (21 hours per week) position was approved. Funding for this position was created through departmental restructuring.

Currently the manager works with the municipal heritage committee, and a committee of council mandated by the province and comprised of Waterloo citizens. The committee meets monthly to advise council on the preservation of properties of architectural and historical significance and to implement awareness programs concerning the preservation of Waterloo's heritage and architecture through the Ontario Heritage Act.

Customer & administrative services

This part-time position (28 hours per week) provides administrative support to the manager and information to visitors of the City of Waterloo Museum. This position responds to customer questions and provides historical information on current exhibitions.

5. Strategic Directions for the Future

The City of Waterloo's strategic focus is to strive to be a better place to live, work, learn and play. In support of this overarching focus the culture plan includes a vision and guiding principles for cultural development. This is followed by a description of what the city's future cultural development role should look like, along with six goals to focus city efforts, and 37 recommendations that identify actions the city can pursue to contribute to achieving the community's vision for culture.

Each of the 37 recommendations identifies a city department or division to lead implementation, recognizing that cross-departmental collaboration will be needed. A proposed timeline for implementation over the next 10 years is included. Each recommendation is identified for implementation in either the short-term (years 1-3), medium-term (years 4-6), or long-term (years 7-10), though it is recognized that implementation of many of the recommendations will required a multi-phased approach that may take a number of years to complete. Financial considerations have also been outlined with the recognition that a broad range of alternate funding sources, such as grants and private sector involvement, will be critical to

implementation. Where alternate funding is not an option, new municipal resource requests would be brought forward for consideration in future budget processes.

Vision

What is the purpose of a vision?

A vision describes an ideal future and is intended to inspire and provide focus for action over time. The vision below reflects the community's priorities and aims to paint a picture of Waterloo's ideal cultural future.

The proposed vision for 2024 is:

Remaining true to our past, building on present strengths, and making the most of opportunities, Waterloo is a culturally transforming city – vibrant and resilient.

Culture is the heart of the community and collaboration is the starting point for civic engagement. The city has an artful public realm, where whimsy and spontaneity are encouraged, and public spaces are highly animated. The uptown is a cultural hub that has spilled over to enliven neighbourhoods throughout Waterloo. Intensification of the core has successfully balanced heritage with new architecture and streetscapes that foster interaction, are memorable and promote a local identity. The business and technology sectors recognize the mutual benefits of investing in a strong arts and culture scene and how it animates people on the street. The City of Waterloo and its staff are valued for facilitating a lively and rich urban experience in collaboration with culture workers, organizations, and regional stakeholders to allow creative pursuits to thrive. City decision-making and resource allocation demonstrates the central role culture plays in quality of life, social interaction, and community well-being. Waterloo is a city where culture workers of all kinds want to live and work, and where they feel appreciated for their contributions. Waterloo actively engages the full spectrum of residents in all aspects of the cultural community.

Guiding Principles

What is the purpose of guiding principles?

Guiding principles explain the core values and assumptions of a plan. These guiding principles express citizens' shared priorities and served to guide the development of the culture plan's goals and recommendations.

The guiding principles also help ensure that the implementation process moves forward in a way that is consistent with the vision of the residents of Waterloo, and help to answer the question: "What should culture look like in Waterloo in the future?"

Guiding principles:

- We know future cultural development must be **authentic and true** to collective past and present realities;

- We see **vision, leadership, and commitment** as fundamental to encouraging culture to thrive;
- We recognize that empowering citizens to effect change is essential to **community and cultural development**;
- We strive to be **inclusive**, enabling all residents to engage in cultural pursuits;
- We understand that culture and heritage define individual and shared **identities** that shape the community;
- We believe that a **livable city** requires balanced attention to economic, environmental, social, and cultural strategic priorities;
- We value **creativity and risk-taking** as essential to innovation and progress.

6. The City's Role Moving Forward

This culture plan proposes that the primary role of the City of Waterloo in supporting local cultural development is to act as **a catalyst for culture**.

In chemistry, a catalyst is a substance that causes or accelerates a chemical reaction. A catalyst can also be defined as something that triggers an event or change, or a person whose enthusiasm or energy causes others to be more enthusiastic and energetic.

What does it mean for the Corporation of the City of Waterloo and its staff to act as a catalyst for local cultural development?

It means that the work that the city is currently doing through the city museum and collections, festival and events, public art, city-owned buildings, development approvals, and in many other areas should continue, but enhancement should be pursued, and a new, corporate-wide philosophy about culture should be embraced.

It means that the city does not need to develop cultural content. The necessary talent already exists within the community. Rather, the city must embrace responsibility for creating an enabling environment where the community's cultural vision can be achieved.

The city's role should involve:

- championing the community's vision for culture;
- providing funding and in-kind support, and space for culture to happen;
- networking, relationship building, and collaboration within the culture sector and across sectors;
- acting as a conduit for information;
- breaking down barriers to cultural activities and engagement at the city and within the community;
- connecting the dots – identifying opportunities and bringing ideas, people, and resources together to help make great things happen;
- encouraging creativity and creative expression in all areas of community life;
- promoting the connections between community development, economic development and quality of life;



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- collaborating with complementary organizations such as the Creative Enterprise Initiative, the UpTown BIA, Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation and other local governments;
- celebrating local cultural accomplishments and the value of “art for art’s sake”.

The new role of the city with regards to culture offers great potential for the continued prosperity of the community. Waterloo’s diverse economy with strengths in the academic, finance, advanced manufacturing and technology fields, have positioned the City of Waterloo well in times of stronger economic headwinds. An enhanced focus on local culture development, and the value of the local artists, culture workers, and cultural organizations and institutions, will help sustain Waterloo as a safe, healthy and prosperous community long into the future. It will make Waterloo more resilient in the face of the rapid rate of global change and the continuing shift to a knowledge-based economy.

This investment in culture will support a high quality of life and give Waterloo a competitive edge, resulting in:

- potential growth of the private sector employee base;
- responsiveness to the needs of all members of the community;
- attraction and support of a diverse population with different interests and skills;
- economic vitality through quality employment opportunities across a broad spectrum; and
- creation of opportunities for cultural experiences that enhances the community’s enjoyment of life.

Goals and Recommendations Overview

To achieve the community’s vision for culture, six goals and 37 recommendations were identified by the working group and confirmed by the community during phase two of public consultation. The goals reflect the key themes that emerged during the consultation process. Goal 1 was identified as the most important by the community and following that, goals 2 through 6 were deemed of equal importance.

The recommendations are intended to support overall progress towards achieving each goal by identifying action areas for the city. While all of the recommendations included in this plan were identified as appropriate responses to priority issues and needs within the community, some recommendations have been identified with a symbol (**) to denote high priority based on community feedback.

Goal 1: Uncover and build community capacity for creativity, expression and cultural engagement.

Goal 2: Strengthen the community’s cultural heritage identity by uniting Waterloo’s past, with its present and future through management and education.

Goal 3: Enliven streets, neighbourhoods, public and green spaces.

Goal 4: Engage the diversity of this community to build a shared sense of belonging.

Goal 5: Expand community awareness and appreciation of culture.

Goal 6: Foster collaborations in the culture sector.

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The following summary outlines the corporate lead, timeline and financial implications for the complete list of recommendations. It provides guidelines for when implementation of each recommendation should begin (short, medium or long term). This timeline recognizes that some project can be completed in months, while others will take multiple years to complete or will require a multi-phased approach.

Corporate lead	Total recommendations
Community services department	11
Corporate services department	1
Economic development department	22
Integrated planning & public works department	3

Implementation timelines	Total recommendations
Short-term (1-3 years)	24 [∞]
Medium-term (4-6 years)	10
Long-term (7-10 years)	3

Financial considerations	Total recommendations
Existing resources	19 ^{∞∞}
New funding – one time	3
New funding – continuous	15

[∞]Eight of the recommendations are identified for implementation over the short-term (years 1-3 years) to medium-term (years 4-6) or short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10), recognizing that implementation will involve a multi-phased approach.

^{∞∞}Three of the recommendations identified as existing resources will also require additional funding for full implementation. In these cases, existing resources will allow for partial implementation.

Goal 1: Uncover and build community capacity for creativity, expression and cultural engagement.

Community members recognize that Waterloo has a wealth of local cultural talent including:

- professional artists in a wide range of disciplines;
- culture and knowledge workers and experts;
- heritage workers and experts;
- cultural organizations and institutions;
- faculty, staff and students at post-secondary institutions; and
- the capacity within all residents to be creative.

Building on the strong arts, culture, and heritage base in Waterloo can help strengthen local culture. The community identified a need to uncover and build community capacity for more culture not just sustain what already exists. The community was clear that the city's primary role in local cultural development should be to uncover creative potential, build community capacity for cultural expression, foster growth of the cultural sector, and nurture ideas that will transform the city's cultural scene.

During the public consultation process, this goal was identified as the highest priority in this plan. This goal aligns closely with the City of Waterloo's role as a catalyst for culture discussed in section 6. Individuals and organizations in the community have the capacity to create cultural content, but some municipal support is needed. The community wants to continue to make Waterloo a vibrant place, but needs an enabling environment to encourage this to happen.

But what do we mean by community capacity?

Community capacity refers to the ability of community members to use assets in the community to improve local quality of life. Each community's collection of assets is unique and reflects the specific characteristics of the community.⁹ Uncovering and building community capacity is about the identification, strengthening and linking of the community's tangible resources, such as organizations or facilities, and intangible resources like community spirit and creative potential.¹⁰ To support local cultural development, capacity building must focus on the activities, resources and support that can strengthen the skills and abilities of residents and community groups to act, grow and change. It is about enabling opportunities that allow the community's potential for creativity, expression and cultural engagement to be fully realized.

The city's role in uncovering and building community capacity for culture should generally focus on:

⁹ Community Capacity. (1999). In Mental Health Promotion Tool Kit: A practical resource for community initiatives, Canadian Mental Health Association, Retrieved from: <http://www.cmha.ca>

¹⁰ Community Capacity. (n.d.). In Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition. Retrieved from: <http://www.ohcc-ccso.ca/>



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- identifying community needs, opportunities, and responsibilities;
- supporting the community to plan, organize and take action;
- connecting to and helping to leverage resources; and
- evaluating the impact of action on achieving shared goals with the community.

The city's role in uncovering and building community capacity is not just about funding and grants for culture, though an investment strategy for culture is important, but also about breaking down barriers, making connections, and supporting local efforts. The city can encourage the emergence of authentic cultural expression by creators of all kinds. City staff could develop stronger relationships with cultural organizations and culture workers. A particular interest was expressed to see the city provide greater support to grassroots initiatives because the grassroots level is where authentic cultural expression originates. City staff should also be enabled to reach across political boundaries. Community members do not recognize municipal boundaries as barriers to cultural engagement across the region. Joint initiatives with neighbouring municipalities and culture organizations located outside of Waterloo's boundaries will be necessary to leveraging existing resources to achieve the community's vision for culture.

Recommendations:

**** 1.1 Institute a culture policy for the City of Waterloo that reflects the community's vision.**

A culture policy for the City of Waterloo should be a complementary tool to support implementation of the culture plan. The culture policy should reinforce the community's vision for culture and the goals identified in this plan. It should aim to clearly articulate and formalize the role the city will play in uncovering and building community capacity to support local cultural development. It should provide direction and inspire municipal staff take on a role in supporting cultural development in their daily work in order to make way for increased vibrancy. Similar policies to support local cultural development have been developed by the City of Hamilton, City of North Bay, and Prince Edward County.

The policy should support the direction and goals within other corporate and community plans, such as the official plan, the economic development strategy and the mayor's advisory committee for age-friendly Waterloo: report to the mayor, among others. It should clearly articulate the important role culture plays in quality of life and a safe and healthy community, and should identify why it is important for the City of Waterloo to invest resources, both human and financial, into cultural development.

The culture policy should also empower staff to work more closely with neighbouring municipalities and other levels of government to support local cultural development. It should speak to the importance of capacity building through collaboration with community stakeholders.

Once implemented, this policy will help keep the culture plan on council's agenda and will encourage staff to identify how initiatives contribute to local culture when bringing forward information to council.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

****1.2 Explore strategies to add an arts & culture coordinator position in the arts, culture, festivals & events unit.**

The City of Waterloo currently has three full time staff for the arts, culture, festival and events unit (ACFE). Two staff support major festivals and event programming in the Waterloo Public Square, while the manager supports all other culture-related city programs. This staff compliment is currently working at full capacity and cannot respond to emerging requests from the community. There are no additional human and financial resources to direct to new initiatives. As a result, there are lost opportunities for new and exciting community initiatives that support a vibrant local culture.

The addition of an arts & culture coordinator would have many benefits for the community. It would allow the ACFE division to have greater capacity to work with and assist community-based culture initiatives. Specifically focused on greater support to local arts and culture organizations and individual cultural workers, this position would help ensure sustainability and resiliency of the culture sector over the long term. More focus could be directed to supporting grassroots cultural initiatives that serve diverse groups and new or emerging community interests. This position could also focus on building relationships and collaboration among community and cultural organizations, thereby improving capacity to do great things in Waterloo.

The Waterloo Region's vital signs report released in October 2013 by the Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation indicates that the number of people employed in arts, culture, recreation and sport declined from a high of almost 9,000 in 2011, to just over 6,000 people in 2012.¹¹ This is a concerning trend because attracting and retaining culture workers is necessary to a vibrant and healthy community, and in turn a vibrant community helps strengthen the local economy. The arts and culture coordinator could help to address this trend and could work towards making Waterloo a more attractive place for culture workers and creative class employees to live, work, learn and play.

This new staff position is essential to enabling full implementation of this culture plan. Given the demands on existing staff, the new initiatives proposed in this plan require additional human resources to enable the ACFE division to implement and manage these programs. This new role would create capacity for the manager to take on a lead role implementing the culture plan internally within the Corporation of the City of Waterloo. This would help create synergies among City of Waterloo staff. It would also allow opportunities to bridge interested groups, agencies and companies in cultural activities and for more collaboration with partners such as the City of Kitchener, Creative Enterprise Initiative and Waterloo Region Tourism.

Corporate lead: Economic development department

¹¹ Kitchener-Waterloo Community Foundation. (2013). Waterloo Region's Vital Signs.

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

****1.3 Develop a municipal cultural investment strategy with a range of funding and support types.**

Local cultural organizations make great contributions to the community, often with limited budgets. Cultural organizations identified financial support from the City of Waterloo and other funders within the region and beyond as important to keeping these organizations sustainable and allowing them to focus attention on creative work and engaging the community. Funding from the City of Waterloo can sometimes be leveraged by cultural organizations to bring in funding from other sources, such as from the provincial or federal government, into the city. City investment also demonstrates the commitment to the organization thereby encouraging the business sector and private donors to provide financial support.

Funding support is important to the full range of cultural organizations in our community. This includes large cultural institutions, smaller community groups, independent culture focused businesses, grassroots initiatives happening at the neighbourhood level, and individual culture workers.

In order to best use the available municipal funding and resources for culture and to achieve the greatest impact, the development of a municipal cultural investment strategy is recommended. This initiative should include a thorough review of existing funding (both direct and in-kind) relationships and streams of financial support for culture including:

- annual community, culture & recreation cash grants;
- multi-year funding agreements;
- per capita or sustainability arts funding;
- neighbourhood matching fund;
- in-kind support;
- facility rental discounts;
- lease agreements; and
- other types of organization specific arrangements.

The strategy should include the development of a funding model and guidelines that would address the full spectrum of cultural initiatives from larger institutions through to grassroots projects. Development of this strategy may mean changes to existing funding relationships or allocation to allow for equitable distribution of funds. Future funding approaches should be outcome-based. It should also consider the broader regional funding context, including funding opportunities from other municipalities and the Region of Waterloo in assessing gaps and ensuring the full continuum of community needs are addressed.

Local cultural organizations have also indicated that simplification in grant application processes, in particular use of a single application form for all culture grants in the region, would be helpful

The cultural investment strategy should also look at how funding levels can be increased over the next 10 years to bring investment in culture more in line with other creative cities in Ontario.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit with community services department/community programming & outreach services division

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

1.4 Increase the City of Waterloo's capacity to support collaborative festivals and events.

Festivals and events were seen as a primary cultural strength in Waterloo. The majority of local festivals have no admission fee, which makes them inclusive and accessible. Residents recognize the important role the City of Waterloo has played in supporting cultural festivals and events to develop and grow. The Waterloo Busker Carnival, UpTown Waterloo Jazz Festival, and Oktoberfest are high profile collaborative festivals that involve city support. Residents value the high quality cultural opportunities provided through festivals and events, but also appreciate the opportunity they provide to engage with the broader community. Collaboration with the UpTown Waterloo BIA is essential to the success of uptown festivals and events.

A desire to see growth in city support for local cultural events was a common message from the community. To support this growth, the city should build a business case for investment of resources in cultural events by identifying how they contribute to the economic, cultural, and community development goals of the city. The community also desires a return on investment approach to supporting festivals and events, though understands that the return may have community benefits other than financial gain. Cultural events are critical to Waterloo being a great place to live, work, learn and play; understanding their tangible and intangible impact will help to demonstrate their importance.

A long-term strategy to support the growth of existing cultural events and the addition of new events driven by the community should also be considered for development. Community members and corporations want to see existing events grow and evolve, but would also like to experience new annual events, such as seasonal and heritage programming. It is important that new cultural events are initiated from the community with the city fostering growth through funding or staff support.

Opportunities for shared events with post-secondary institutions and other stakeholders should also be explored. Cultural events are opportunities to build relationships among the broader community and local post-secondary students. Joint initiatives between the city, post-secondary institutions and other collaborators would contribute to creating a sense of belonging and community pride among students which may encourage them to stay in Waterloo after graduation.

Residents continue to desire the festival area proposed in the Waterloo Park master plan. This future space could provide a home for larger festivals and allow for growth of existing festivals which is critical in talent attraction and servicing a diversifying community. An assortment of

infrastructure assets would be required for the festival area (electrical, staging, seating and relocation of existing facilities) to ensure the greatest potential benefit to the community. Planned LRT stops will provide direct access to the park and uptown core. Additionally, more animation of Waterloo Park, similar to city-coordinated programming at the Waterloo Public Square, is regarded as important. The impact of dedicated city staff to program the square since 2009 is an indicator of what is possible.

Corporate lead: Economic development department
Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

1.5 Review existing bylaws, permits, guidelines and associated processes with a view to considering broad community values and allowing for cultural vibrancy.

Waterloo residents have great capacity and enthusiasm for putting on cultural events and activities and making the community more vibrant. However, community members have indicated that city bylaws, permits and the surrounding processes create barriers to fully realizing local cultural capacity. The community would like to see more community art, community events, and generally a more vibrant and engaging city. For example, the city's sign bylaw, noise bylaw and vendors permit, among other requirements, have been identified as limiting the community's own capacity to develop new initiatives for cultural vibrancy. Community members indicated that some bylaws are too stringent and restrictive, or that the process to get approvals to put on events is too complex and does not allow for spontaneity. Community members would like to see these impediments to cultural vibrancy removed wherever possible.

Culture vibrancy could be improved in Waterloo by applying a culture lens to these and other bylaws and guidelines during the next scheduled review. A new consideration might include film permits. Staff should also focus greater consideration on simplifying application and exemption processes and supporting cultural activity when making decisions related to bylaws and permits. A cross-departmental committee could be established to consider requests for exceptions to bylaws and permits that would support cultural goals and reflect community values. It should also be ensured that the city's noise calendar include all major festival and events happening in the city. The creation of a simple "how to" guide would assist those leading cultural initiatives to navigate the city's bylaw requirements and permit processes. This change in how the city does business would reduce barriers and the creative capacity of residents could flourish.

Corporate lead: Community services department/municipal enforcement services division
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10)

1.6 Explore innovative ways to fund city-supported cultural activities and assets.

Innovative approaches to funding are needed to implement the culture plan. Given competing demands on the municipal tax base it is not prudent for culture plan implementation to seek funding directly from council only. While some of the initiatives recommended in this plan may best be referred to future municipal budget processes for consideration, there may also be

opportunities to pursue one time funding for projects through the heritage reserve fund and the economic development fund if the project meets the fund requirements.

A combination of non-municipal funding sources will also need to be examined by staff.

Private sector support will continue to be critical to the growth of the local culture sector. The support of Sun Life Financial for the jazz and the busker festivals, among other private sector/culture sector partnerships, are examples to build on. There are opportunities both big and small for the private sector to partner with the city and the culture sector to support local cultural development. Sponsorship will be a critical tool to achieve the community's vision for culture.

There are also opportunities to pursue provincial and federal grant funding to support culture. The culture plan project was supported by an Ontario government grant from the creative communities prosperity fund. New and changing grant funding streams become available from time to time and are an opportunity for the city to bring additional funds into the community to support local cultural development. Anticipated funding opportunities related to Canada's upcoming sesquicentennial and the rural economic development fund are possible sources that the city should be prepared to explore.

Exploring new ways of using city revenue to support culture is another essential approach to supporting growth of the culture sector. In particular, opportunities for using revenue generated via Section 37 of the Ontario Planning Act to support culture plan implementation should be explored. While currently these funds can be used for public art, there may be opportunities to support other types of cultural initiatives.

Some of these opportunities would be best pursued in collaboration with the Creative Enterprise Initiative or other community stakeholders.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit with corporate services department/finance division

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

1.7 Undertake a study of the space needs for culture workers and cultural activities, and identify innovative, cost effective approaches to better meet local space needs.

Cultural activity requires the right kinds of space, be it a stage, a studio, or a park. Local culture producers identified access to affordable and appropriate space as an issue. Some community members have expressed a desire to see a multi-purpose arts centre developed in uptown Waterloo, similar to the centres in Guelph or Cambridge. There is a desire for more performance space, particularly in the 300 to 600 seat range, as well as a facility to serve as a hub for cultural organizations. Other community members have indicated that there is sufficient space in existing facilities but that there are barriers to accessing that space. The rental fees for City of Waterloo facilities were noted as a barrier.



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Any consideration of adding cultural facility space within Waterloo should involve examination of existing space regionally. It is not fiscally reasonable to expect each municipality in this region to have its own, separate arts facilities.

Creative, low cost options to providing space need to be considered. The Creative Enterprise Initiative's studio space is a successful example of a partnership with the private sector that has created low cost space for culture workers, as well as providing space where collaboration and a sense of community is encouraged.

To plan for cultural space needs, it is recommended that the city study current and anticipated future space needs for culture workers and culture activities. Analysis of the current capacity of existing cultural spaces and examining ways to maximize use of those spaces should take place before building new spaces. A study of culture space needs in Waterloo should build on information from ArtsBuild Ontario and the Creative Enterprise Initiative's cultural mapping project, among other local resources, to understand the current culture space inventory and identify possible gaps. A short-term solution to meeting space needs could involve renovation or adaptation of existing spaces or a review of City of Waterloo facility rental fees.

The cultural space study should include consideration of outdoor and indoor performance space, exhibit spaces, and temporary use spaces and shared space opportunities. Finally, it should consider how to make existing city facilities and open spaces more amendable to cultural pursuits. For example, the park at the corner of William Street and King Street and the Abraham Erb Grist Mill were both identified by the community as municipal spaces with potential for increased use. The study should also consider how underutilized buildings, such as schools in the uptown core, could be repurposed to meet future cultural space needs.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & event unit

Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

Goal 2: Strengthen the community’s cultural heritage identity by uniting Waterloo’s past with its present and future through management and education.

The community’s identity is closely tied to the city’s heritage. Waterloo’s historical narrative, artifact collection, and built heritage help to tell the story of local roots and how they have shaped the city we are today. Documenting local heritage binds the community with shared and diverse experiences to bring people together now and in the future.

Cultural heritage can take many forms - buildings, monuments, museums, archives, bridges, roadways, streetscapes, landscapes, barns and industrial complexes, cemeteries, and folktales. Cultural heritage enriches, inspires, and guides the development of vibrant, livable communities for future generations.

Heritage management is concerned with the identification, protection, and stewardship of cultural heritage in the public interest and can take the form of collections and architecture. Management refers to the long-term conservation and retention of our heritage assets and to provide access to them in a variety of forms. It comprises the cultural expressions of humanity and may be tangible or intangible, movable or immovable, old or new, and owned privately or corporately. The public face of heritage management is seen in education through interpretation, programming and presentation to the public. Heritage education contributes to finding common ground while acknowledging multiple points of view.

Heritage conservation is not about isolating a period of time, but capturing the richly layered life of the city. Conservation is about community working together to protect and promote cultural heritage whether it is collections or the built environment. Local cultural heritage reflects the expressions and aspirations for those who have gone before us as well as today’s culturally diverse communities. Consideration and respect for heritage can help identify innovative ways to balance conservation with intensification.

Cultural heritage conservation is vital to a community’s overall cultural and economic development. An integrated approach to heritage, cultural and economic planning leads to the revitalization of main streets, neighbourhoods and individual properties, creates employment, encourages new business and brings tourist dollars to the city.

Chronicling local stories about cultural assets is what keeps these assets alive and relevant. It is through journalistic story-telling, which can take the form of plaques, educational tours, events, celebrations, publications, building architecture, museum exhibitions, or a social media application, that appreciation for heritage and its contribution to the community is fostered.

Recommendations:

****2.1 Develop a strategy for built heritage, supported by a permanent heritage planner position.**

Residents care about the built heritage of the city. Older buildings tell the story of the development of our community. They add character to our community, and help to develop a sense of place that attracts people to the streets and builds community identity. The city's current built heritage inventory includes 40 designated heritage landmarks, the city's first heritage conservation district in the Macgregor-Albert neighbourhood, and a listing of 50 properties of interest.

The City of Waterloo official plan recognizes conservation of cultural heritage resources as integral to Waterloo's identity, economic potential and quality of life. It calls for retaining significant heritage assets and providing opportunities for integration and interpretation of heritage assets. The official plan anticipates intensification of the urban built environment while emphasizing the importance of conserving Waterloo's cultural heritage for present and future generations.

Residents are proud of local history, but are concerned that important aspects of the city's built heritage has been lost in the midst of rapid growth in recent years and that more will be lost without a concerted conservation effort.

The development of a built heritage strategy will provide a strategic approach that responds to the community's desire to retain built heritage and balance this with intensification throughout the city. This type of strategy would provide a framework to classify the built heritage assets that should be protected while identifying innovative ways to conserve based on best practices from Canada and around the world. This could include consideration of additional heritage districts, and opportunities for adaptive reuse of buildings.

The strategy would also help guide what kinds of structures should be considered as having cultural heritage value in terms of their social significance, architectural quality and other factors. The recent heritage designation of 222 Stanley Drive in the Westmount neighbourhood is a good example of residential mid-century architecture. It illustrates that the community is not just seeing century old buildings, but also more recent buildings, for their heritage value. There is opportunity to identify high quality examples of built heritage from all periods in the city's development for conservation.

The creation of a two-year heritage planner position, in 2013, represents a good step by the city to address built heritage needs. This position is very important to ensuring the development of a built heritage strategy and that identified heritage resources are respectfully incorporated into the layers of future community growth. This heritage planner role will primarily co-ordinate the heritage register, process heritage permit applications, and advise on heritage impact assessments and related planning applications, as well as support understanding of heritage in the corporation. This role will also be the staff liaison to the municipal heritage committee.

The heritage planner role is viewed by the community as an important way to continue to demonstrate the value of heritage conservation within the city.

Corporate lead: Integrated planning & public works department/growth management division
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

****2.2 Develop a strategy that encompasses growth and long-term management for the City of Waterloo Museum & archival collections.**

In 2009, the City of Waterloo's heritage collection was moved from its temporary location at the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery to its new home at Conestoga Mall, creating Waterloo's first civic museum.

The partnership with Conestoga Mall is seen as an innovative model to providing space for a community museum. This arrangement has enabled the city to operate a cultural facility, with a minimal budget, that provides a broad on-site audience for the museum. More than 5,000 people visit the museum annually, indicating success as well as interest in the city's heritage. While there are other museums in the area, such as the Waterloo Region Museum, residents appreciate the distinctive Waterloo-based collection. Residents have indicated they would like to see the museum:

- extend its hours of operation;
- promote exhibits more; and
- offer opportunities for education programming.

To continue to build on the museum's success and to ensure museum sustainability to share the city's heritage collection, a long-term strategy for the museum and its collection is needed. This strategy would identify the future role of the City of Waterloo Museum and its collection. It would explore opportunities for preservation management, programming, future storage needs, and would examine the sustainability of the Conestoga Mall partnership. It would consider opportunities for growth of the City of Waterloo Museum, and look at new innovative models of collaboration with other community organizations to enable growth.

Corporate lead: Community services department/museum & archival collections unit
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

2.3 Increase programming capacity to recognize heritage as a strong educational component of culture.

Residents crave opportunities to learn about Waterloo's heritage. While the heritage stories of the city's Mennonite and German past are more commonly told, there is interest from the community to learn about other aspects of shared heritage. Interest in gaining heritage knowledge ranges from distant to recent past. The city has an opportunity to educate the community about the past to help build community identity.

Currently, the manager of museum and archival collections and two part-time staff filling the roles of a heritage specialist and customer service are responsible for the sharing of heritage stories. The recreation and leisure services master plan, identified that “heritage (including arts and culture) needs to significantly grow and evolve to become an increasing part of developing a more economically prosperous and appealing community.” As the intensification of the city progresses, the role of the City of Waterloo Museum becomes more meaningful to connect the community and therefore necessitates resource commitment. Developing full-time hours for the heritage specialist and customer service positions would strengthen capacity for heritage education programming. Investing in the cultural assets the city holds in the public trust is needed to maintain momentum. This investment would allow for professional staff resources for heritage program development and museum operations, as well as for increased focus on new research, collections management and education through museum exhibitions. It would also allow for further development of collaborative approaches to presenting a broad cross-section of Waterloo’s stories. This could include working with the Waterloo Public Library, post-secondary institutions, and other local museums, and artists and community groups, with the goal of integrating heritage in a deeper way into daily community life.

Corporate lead: Community services department/museum & archival collection unit
Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

2.4 Digitize the city’s heritage collections to provide online access.

One option to grow the community’s access to the City of Waterloo’s heritage artifact and art collections would be through the creation of a digital catalogue. This would provide universal access to the collections and allow improved access for private study, as well as scholarly research that would contribute to the body of work documenting Waterloo’s past. It would also provide an avenue for educators from public schools through to post-secondary institutions to share the artifact collections with students learning about their community.

The digitization project would be a multi-year project requiring additional resources to complete a bottleneck of catalogue accessions entry into the newly obtained collection database. Digitizing archival and object collections would benefit the community and add value to the collections by providing community access through a new format. It would also help preserve the city’s rare and unique special collections.

Corporate lead: Community services department/museum & archival collections unit
Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

2.5 Continue development of the series of provincial standards for community museums to support the City of Waterloo Museum.

The City of Waterloo Museum is a well-regarded cultural asset. Residents are requesting that the museum extend current operating hours and would like more opportunities to learn about heritage through the museum’s artifacts and exhibits. One way to help sustain the museum and increase its capacity to deliver services and programs is to make the museum eligible for pro-

vincial funding for community museums. This would involve completing a required series of 10 provincial standards for community museums. The approval of the collections management policy (2013) by council marks the first step of meeting these standards. The remaining nine management standards deal with areas such as education programming, conservation, exhibition, research, and governance.

Focusing staff resources to support the manager of museum and archival collections in the development of the remaining standards will enable the city to meet eligibility criteria for community museum funding and will contribute to meeting the requirements contained in section 4.7.8 of the city's official plan. It will also support the ongoing efficient and effective management and operation of the museum for the benefit of the community.

Corporate lead: Community services department/museum & archival collections unit
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

2.6 Identify and designate local cultural heritage landscapes as a part of the city's place-making approach to city building.

A cultural heritage landscape is identified by a provincial policy statement as:

...a defined geographical area of heritage significance which has been modified by human activities and is valued by a community. It involves a grouping(s) of individual heritage features such as structures, spaces, archaeological sites and natural elements, which together form a significant type of heritage form, distinctive from that of its constituent elements or parts. Examples may include, but are not limited to, heritage conservation districts designated under the Ontario Heritage Act; and villages, parks, gardens, battlefields, mainstreets and neighbourhoods, cemeteries, railways and industrial complexes of cultural heritage value.¹²

There is growing awareness of the value of cultural heritage landscapes within Waterloo. Parks, mature trees, streetscapes, and heritage buildings have been identified as important to the community. The views and vistas of the Grand River were also highlighted as meaningful, particularly given the lack of other significant waterways in the city. Laurel Creek in the uptown is viewed as a heritage asset despite being partially covered. Uptown neighbourhoods have a strong desire to conserve the character of these areas.

The city has an opportunity to retain the character of the heritage places deemed by the community as important and to develop a plan for these places to be conserved in ways that contribute value to the community.

This recommendation reinforces the importance of the policy direction found in section 4.7.5 of the official plan. The official plan indicates that:

¹² Cultural Heritage Landscape. (2005). In Provincial Policy Statement. Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Retrieved from: <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page1485.aspx>



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- 1) The city will identify and document any cultural heritage landscapes in accordance with the regional implementation guideline for cultural heritage landscape conservation.
- 2) The city will designate cultural heritage landscapes in this plan.
- 3) The city shall require the conservation of cultural heritage landscapes that are characteristic of the city or region through the review of applications for development and/or site alteration.
- 4) The city supports recognition of the Grand River as a Canadian heritage river and will cooperate with the region and Grand River Conservation Authority to promote appropriate initiatives to maintain, enhance, manage and conserve natural, cultural, recreational, scenic and ecological features.

It also supports the need for effective urban design policies, guidelines and processes to strengthen cultural heritage opportunities.

Corporate lead: Integrated planning & public works department/growth management division
Implementation timeline: Long-term (years 7-10)

Goal 3: Enliven streets, neighbourhoods, public and green spaces.

Community members identified public spaces such as parks, streets, trails, neighbourhoods and the public square as important assets that support both community building and cultural development. These spaces are places to gather together and to participate in shared experiences, often rooted in cultural expression.

Residents expressed an overall desire to see more happening in public spaces. The development of the Waterloo Public Square into a lively community-gathering place has piqued interest in having more opportunities of this type throughout the city. Waterloo Park in particular was identified as a natural location for more cultural programming.

Programming is only one component of what the community is looking for in public spaces. Residents appreciate that Waterloo is a clean and well cared-for city, but they are looking for more whimsy and the unexpected in their urban environment. Great streetscapes are also a must if place-making is to be successful.

Public art, whether temporary or permanent, is also important to developing a sense of place, beauty, and engagement in public spaces. Public art also provides an opportunity to tell community stories.

Waterloo has had many successes enlivening public spaces, particularly in recent years, such as the Waterloo Public Square, the Waterloo Park frontage area, the pedestrian promenade along Father David Bauer Drive. Projects underway like the uptown Waterloo streetscape improvement project for King Street North and the Northdale land use and community improvement plan study offer additional opportunities. Ultimately, art and design are central to quality of life and productivity. The current momentum needs to be sustained and enhanced to make public spaces even more lively, engaging and memorable.

Recommendations:

****3.1 Develop a neighbourhood strategy that explores opportunities to create a distinct sense of identity and culture at a neighbourhood level.**

While community members spoke of the importance of continuing to build a strong cultural scene in uptown Waterloo, they also want to see more cultural development at the neighbourhood level.

The city's recreation and leisure master plan called for the development of a neighbourhood services development strategy that would focus on leveraging existing and new neighbourhood associations, supported through a community development model and capacity building services of the city, to facilitate the development and delivery of neighbourhood recreation, leisure, arts and cultural programs aligned with the City of Waterloo's service delivery policy.

The neighbourhood strategy was intended to build community programming capacity where people live rather than requiring travel out of neighbourhoods to access programming.

The culture plan consultation reinforced the need for a neighbourhood strategy, but the community has indicated that it should include a broader focus. The need for a long-term plan for the neighbourhood-matching fund, increased cultural place-making that includes neighbourhood heritage mapping, and cultural engagement opportunities should also be examined in the development of a neighbourhood strategy. Public art, formalized district naming and identity building, as well as increasing cultural and heritage engagement opportunities are tools to enhance safety, cultural vibrancy and sense of place in neighbourhoods that should be considered in development of a strategy.

Corporate lead: Community services department/community & neighbourhood services unit with business services unit

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

****3.2 Develop a list of desired cultural assets and preferred locations to assist with long-term planning when processing development applications under the Planning Act.**

When developers require the city's approval for their proposed development, the city has an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposal. The official plan includes policies to consider density bonusing when developers seek an exception or change to the current zoning of the land proposed for development. The bonusing policies of the city's official plan allow the city to negotiate with the developer to provide, in exchange for increased height and density, certain on-site and/or off-site features or contributions which may benefit the community. These could include large scale art, open/gathering space, green space, or space in the building that could be used for community purposes.

To support local cultural development, staff working in culture and in development approvals should collaborate to identify what cultural assets the community needs and desires so that this information can be used by planning staff in their discussions with developers. The analysis of cultural needs should be an ongoing process, and when available, should consider findings from the space study recommended in section 1.7 and the collaborative work underway with the Creative Enterprise Initiative's cultural assets inventory for grandsocial.ca as well as other guiding documents such as the urban design manual and the built heritage strategy.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit

Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

****3.3 Continue to make progress on place-making initiatives in the uptown core.**

According to the community, place-making in the uptown should continue to be a priority for the city. The uptown is a valued, shared community space that has seen tremendous positive change but there is more to be done to make the uptown an even more thriving urban space.

There are a number of untapped opportunities where action by the city, in collaboration with other stakeholders, could significantly contribute to place-making in the uptown. Place-making is about more than the built environment. Creating a sense of place relies on interactive, inspirational, and high quality public spaces that promote health, happiness and well-being. Deliberate place-making activities can spark imagination and curiosity, and establish a sense of belonging and community in public spaces. The following approaches to place-making in the uptown are recommended:

- The community wants to see ongoing development of a strong commercial sector with an emphasis on local small business and a wide range of dining and entertainment options in uptown. The streetscape improvement project is one example of a collaborative approach to making a section of King Street livelier. The project aims to allow a more balanced approach to the street for safe flow of pedestrian and cyclist traffic. Other collaborative approaches could allow space for street performers, sidewalk patios, and a general air of whimsy and the unexpected. Amenities such as public toilets, potable water and power supply for performance spaces would increase uptown vibrancy.
- The small clusters of boutique stores and service providers, many of which are culture focused, on Regina Street and the side streets between Regina and King could be encouraged to expand, making a greater connection between King and Regina, and activating appropriate side streets in uptown Waterloo. Wayfinding signage could help encourage pedestrian traffic off King.
- The ION station areas pose unique opportunities to create concentrated areas for cultural engagement. The stations could feature a variety of art forms and could serve as sources of information about surrounding neighbourhoods.
- In a city with few naturally occurring water features, the partially buried presence of Laurel Creek in the uptown was identified as an opportunity for place-making activity that may involve city-owned lands.
- The corners of Caroline Street and Erb Street are home to three award-winning buildings that are major cultural institutions. Taking into account the adjacent Barrel Yards development, which will see approximately 2,300 new people living in the uptown, attention should be focused on improving the connectivity from Waterloo Park through to Waterloo City Hall with a more bike and pedestrian friendly feel, and opportunities for cultural and heritage engagement, thus creating desirable spaces to gather and interact along the corridor.
- Updating the city's urban design guidelines to reflect the city's official plan and align with public expectations for a high quality built environment will continue to promote design excellence in place-making initiatives. The city should focus on continuing to implement its strategy in the official plan for balancing the city's intensification with the protection and creative adaptive re-use of local significant heritage buildings found in the uptown.
- Find opportunities to incorporate public art and community benefits through the future disposition of surplus city-owned lands.

The result of an ongoing focus on the uptown will be more people on the street, more spaces for public enjoyment and an overall innovative approach to the urban core.

Corporate lead: Economic development department with integrated planning & public works department

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10)

****3.4 Plan for and continue to invest in the development of the Waterloo Public Square over the long term.**

Since opening in 2009, the Waterloo Public Square has become a much-loved destination for residents. The square has transformed a former parking lot in uptown Waterloo into a focal point for the city. It includes a curved accessible walkway, terraced landings, amphitheater style seating and a large open performance space. In 2010, the Waterloo Public Square won a National Urban Design Award in the Civic Design category. But it is more than the design of the space that makes the Waterloo Public Square an important cultural asset in Waterloo – it is the wide variety of formal and informal activities that happen during all four seasons that make it a cultural heart for the city.

It is used for a broad range of cultural activities from dance classes and storytelling to concerts. In the winter it is transformed into a free open-air skating rink. It is a highly engaging and accessible space that brings people together.

It is also used as a secondary venue during the jazz and buskers festivals, and it is home to the weekly UpTown Market. In 2012, there were more than 500-programmed events in the square – a clear indication of the community interest in this space. The square is also a meeting, gathering, people watching, or relaxing space, playing an important role in community building.

The planned ION station alongside the square has been raised as a concern by residents, with regard to altering the use and feel of the square, but it is also seen as an opportunity to develop a unique and engaging area to showcase art and to promote cultural happenings. This kind of development would contribute to enhancing the square as an open and inviting public gathering space.

Residents want to see the public square continue to grow and develop. Visions of transforming the public square into an Italian style piazza emerged during the consultation process. A water feature, reflecting the natural heritage of Laurel Creek in this site, is highly desired. Potable water and electrical upgrades would support a greater range of events. Additional shade and greenery upgrades to the square are also desired. The goal is for the public square to become an even more vibrant place for the community to interact and engage in culture.

Corporate lead: Economic development department with integrated planning & public works department

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3) to medium-term (years 4-6)

****3.5 Develop a joint initiative to explore the potential for temporary use of empty retail spaces in the uptown as spaces for cultural expression and animation.**

While uptown Waterloo has continued to develop as a desirable location for shops, services and restaurants, there are times when retail space is empty in the uptown. These vacancies provide an untapped opportunity for cultural expression.

In Seattle, this opportunity is harnessed through an initiative called “Storefronts Seattle” aimed at animating empty storefronts in downtown. Collaboration between the business and culture sectors is revitalizing urban areas in Seattle. Through this program, empty storefronts serve as temporary places to showcase local talent and heritage through galleries, exhibits, pop-up stores, or educational opportunities. The program helps to increase foot traffic and market the features of the space to new, potential commercial ventures.

Residents are very interested in seeing a program of this type in uptown Waterloo, and beyond. Within this program, tenants, such as individual cultural workers or cultural organizations interested in using a space, would be responsible for any minor leasehold changes to the space they need. The agreement with the building owners would be based on the understanding that use is temporary. The owner would continue to seek a long-term tenant and when one is found, the temporary tenant would vacate the space within 30 days. For the building owner, the benefit of participation comes from the security of having people in the space, and increasing exposure and desirability of the available space. For the temporary tenant, the benefit of the program is access to low cost space and community exposure to their creative work. For the community, a program like “Storefronts Seattle” keeps the uptown shopping area attractive and vibrant, and provides new and innovative opportunities for cultural engagement. This approach would be particularly beneficial in the winter months, creating additional indoor space opportunities.

Adapting this model could contribute to enhancing the attractiveness of uptown Waterloo for new business ventures, particularly those with a cultural or innovation focus, thereby contributing to the growth of uptown Waterloo as the cultural heart of the city.

A collaborative approach would be required for this type of initiative to succeed. While the city could help facilitate the project, and contribute some financial or in-kind support, other organizations such as the Creative Enterprise Initiative, the UpTown Waterloo Business Improvement Area (UpTown Waterloo BIA), the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce, cultural organizations and workers, and of course, willing building owners, would need to play a part. A pilot project would be an appropriate way to test this approach.

Corporate lead: Economic development department
Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

3.6 Develop a public art program.

Public art is part of what makes a place or space memorable and engaging. This is true of Anish Kapoor’s “Cloud Gate” in Chicago, or Jyhling Lee’s “Origami Goose” at the Waterloo Public Library’s Harper branch. Residents are interested in exploring new approaches to public art in Waterloo, such as a focus on local artists, and whimsical pieces that allow for interaction. This could include exploring opportunities with the Region of Waterloo to include public art at Waterloo LRT stations. Residents noted that public artworks do not need to be permanent; opportunities for temporary installations could be created.

The city’s current approach to public art is focused on the existing percent for art policy and sporadically adding to the public art collection as opportunities arise. Moving forward, a comprehensive, multi-faceted program approach for public art in Waterloo is suggested. The existing percent for art and public art donation policies require review and integration into a larger strategy to grow the public art collection in a planned way and to encourage installation of public art by private and not-for profit organizations. A plan and resources for maintaining existing public art should also be considered. The public art selection process should be updated to better align selection criteria with the type of artwork desired by the community and the city’s collections management policy. There is also need for a long-term review of potential locations in the city where public art should be installed, that takes into account opportunities in all areas of the city, and links planned streetscape improvements with public art installations.

While public art is typically thought of as large scale works, in the out of doors, opportunities to share the city’s fine art collections with residents should be also pursued, as should additional opportunities to display the work of local artists in city buildings such as City Hall or RIM Park. The recent installation of “Glass Fourteen” at RIM Park, a collaborative creation of local youth and professional artist mentors, is an example of the kind of approach to growing the public art collection that could be pursued.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit
Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

3.7 Establish a municipal artist-in-residence program.

In 1995, the City of Kitchener created the first Canadian municipal artist-in-residence program. Programming is presented by the artist-in-residence throughout the year and emphasis is placed on community engagement. It has proven to be a successful program that stimulates conversation between artists, residents, city staff and public officials. Similar programs have been developed across Canada. Waterloo has an opportunity to help showcase local arts and build on Kitchener’s success through the development of a municipal artist-in-residence program.

A Waterloo program should be distinct, but complementary to other local artist-in-residence programs. It should be broader than the visual arts and could include dance, theatre, music, writing, graphic design or any number of artistic pursuits. The program could be targeted each

year on a particular theme or issue for exploration. There is a desire to see the artist-in-residence focus on the diversity of local cultures and forms of cultural expression in Waterloo as a way to connect arts activity with community building.

As the City of Waterloo does not have a gallery space like the Rotunda Gallery in Kitchener City Hall, innovative approaches to exhibits would be needed and could include using both indoor and outdoor spaces throughout the community. Through the program, there could also be the opportunity for the city to commission a piece of work from the artist-in-residence that would become part of the city's art collection.

The artist-in-residence could also act as an arts and culture expert for the city, and help to bring together diverse sectors of the community into a collaborative dialogue on art.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

3.8 Involve regional artists, wherever possible, in the design of public infrastructure projects to incorporate artistic elements into the heritage of the future.

Combining functionality and aesthetic quality of the built environment is important to residents and can contribute to making this city a great place to visit. One way for the city to contribute to raising the aesthetic quality of the city is by adapting a philosophy of "public works as public art."

This means that public infrastructure projects, such as larger projects like LRT station areas, roadways, intersections, parks, or sports fields, or smaller components of the built environment such as railings, culverts and street lighting, are selected not only for their functional quality, but also elements of artfulness, good design, and a reflection of local heritage.

Following this philosophy, city engineering and planning staff would be encouraged to engage both culture staff and local artists of a wide range of disciplines, as well as local heritage experts, in collaborative planning for new public spaces, new streetscape projects, other city initiated projects, such as parks, and renewal of public infrastructure. This process would acknowledge that engineered works are driven by legislation (such as the Municipal Act or Planning Act), standards and existing specifications for safety and function. These structural requirements will take priority, and opportunities to incorporate artfulness will be identified through a case-by-case review.

By taking this lead, the city has the capacity to inspire the private sector to involve artists and heritage experts in development projects, raising the overall quality of design in the public realm and contributing to making the city an exceptionally beautiful and memorable place to live and visit.

Corporate lead: Integrated planning & public works department
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3) to medium-term (years 4-6)

Goal 4: Enhance engagement of community diversity to build a stronger, shared sense of belonging.

The City of Waterloo has been undergoing a dramatic change in its demographic profile over the last 20 years. In 2012, 16.94 per cent of the city's population self-identified as a visible minority¹³ and 22.04 per cent had a mother tongue other than English or French¹⁴. It is anticipated that this community will continue to increase in diversity as we move through the life cycle of this plan.

It is important to note that a focus on diversity is about more than multiculturalism or immigration. These are important issues to residents, but diversity at the core is about difference, and this goal is about making it a priority for the city to understand, respect and value difference. Difference can include ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, physical ability, language, education, occupation, or family structure.

City of Waterloo staff currently work to engage the diversity of our community in many ways, such as through facilitation and support of neighbourhood associations and a broad range of community groups; working with post-secondary institutions and the town and gown committee; participating in regional initiatives such as the Immigration Waterloo Region; and implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards throughout the corporation, to name a few. Residents recognize the progress made in Waterloo, but indicated that there is a need for a greater focus on diversity and improving access, equity and inclusion within the corporation and throughout the life of the community. Many of the programs, services, and systems in place in our community were developed when the population was much more homogenous. This is no longer the case, and change is needed to best meet the needs of the community.

The most recent vital signs report from the Kitchener-Waterloo Community Foundation indicates an overall trend that the community's sense of belonging continues to decline, particularly for the 20–34 and 45–64 age groups. The report suggests that newcomers to the community, not only from outside of Canada, but also from other cities and provinces, need to be better engaged to develop a stronger sense of belonging. There is more to be done to help ensure all residents see themselves as having the opportunity to be fully engaged in the city, whether through city programs and services, or as part of city decision-making.

Residents are aware of the demographic changes underway in Waterloo and a common theme emerged: residents want to get to know each other and learn more about diverse cultural traditions. The broad range of artistic and cultural practices engaged in by residents should be celebrated and support from the city would help them to flourish. The city can play a role as a

¹³ Statistics Canada, 2006 Adjusted Census via Environics Analytics

¹⁴ Ibid.

door opener for diverse artists, culture workers, and cultural organizations to help build their own capacity to contribute to a vibrant culture scene in Waterloo.

This goal suggests opportunities to:

- bridge gaps between diverse components of the community;
- develop an increased sense of belonging to the community;
- demonstrate commitment to the value of individual differences and different points of view;
- remove barriers to participation in civic life, public consultation process, and city programs and services;
- better reflect the diversity of community interests in festivals & events, cultural offerings, heritage, recreation, and other services available in Waterloo.

Diversity is not only an issue related to a strong and healthy community; it is also related to economic prosperity. A welcoming and diverse city helps to encourage skilled workers from around the world choose to work in Waterloo, and to stay in Waterloo. In today's global economy, embracing diversity is advantageous to a prosperous community.

Recommendations:

****4.1 Develop a diversity strategy.**

A shift in the demographic profile of the city, and awareness of the growing diversity of our community, brings forward an opportunity to examine changing expectations and needs of the community. The Region of Waterloo and City of Kitchener, as local examples, have already developed plans to address community diversity, recognizing diversity as an asset and strength to build on for a stronger community and prosperous economy.

There are social and economic barriers to participation in city services, particularly in recreation, culture, and heritage. A diversity strategy would help create more inclusive city programs and services reflective of the varying needs and interests of a diverse population.

A diversity strategy for Waterloo should examine:

- how the city can support broad civic engagement, rather than being limited to participation on advisory committees of council or in public engagement processes;
- how to harness the differences within the community, and communicate respect for individual differences;
- the value and strength a diverse population can bring to the community;
- how the community can foster diversity to achieve community goals;
- how to remove barriers to full engagement in the life of the community.
- the valuable work already being done by the City of Waterloo, other local governments, and community partners to embrace diversity in this community; and
- how to make Waterloo a community where all feel welcomed, valued, and belong.

The diversity strategy should recognize the many ways in which residents differ, but should pay particular attention to:

- ethnicity;
- new immigrants;
- lower income residents;
- LGBTTIQQ2SA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning, two-spirited and allies) residents;
- people with disabilities; and
- local Aboriginal communities.

This will help to attract and retain residents from around the world, which will be crucial to a prosperous economy and diversifying the cultural opportunities in the community.

Corporate lead: Community services department/business services unit with community & neighbourhood services unit

Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

****4.2 Initiate a community-driven, multicultural event focusing on performance and arts with an accompanying symposium.**

Within the community there is a desire to welcome people that have come to Waterloo from other parts of the world, to share cultural traditions with each other, and build a stronger sense of community and belonging. Waterloo residents recognize Kitchener's annual multicultural festival held in Victoria Park as the type of event that should also happen in Waterloo. Since Kitchener's event primarily focuses on food, it has been suggested that Waterloo's event should have a different focus, such as performance and art. Waterloo Park, the crown jewel of Waterloo, could serve as the location for this new multicultural festival, harkening back to the popular Sounds of Summer Festival. The opportunity to collaborate with the event held in the City of Kitchener should be explored. The Waterloo event could be done in collaboration with the City of Kitchener's event, creating a multi-site festival, bridging the two cities.

The city's role in this event could be both a financial contribution in the early years of the event to help build and nurture its growth, as well as staff facilitation and support. To be a true reflection of the community, however, the festival should be driven by local cultural organizations and community members. The festival could include a symposium to bring together cultural and ethnic heritage-focused organizations for learning and collaboration. The success of events like Neruda's Latinfest held in the Waterloo Public Square, the Multicultural Family Day event held at the Waterloo Public Library Harper Branch and the traditional Pow Wow held at the University of Waterloo each year, demonstrate the community's interest in this area.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit

Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

****4.3 Work closely with post-secondary institutions and associated stakeholders to break down barriers between campuses and the community.**

Waterloo is home to three well-regarded post-secondary institutions that are major employers and host to tens of thousands of energetic, creative and innovative students. The broader community feels there are limited opportunities to connect with the post-secondary institutions; at the same time, the students are transient and not fully engaged in the community. Waterloo becomes a bedroom community for students as many return to their home communities on weekends and on breaks. Many students do not venture more than a few blocks from campus and are not actively involved in the full range of cultural offerings available off-campus. Students have indicated that they find it challenging to develop a sense of belonging in Waterloo, a sense that this community is home. As a result, upon graduating, many students move away and Waterloo loses a tremendous talent pool that employers are seeking.

A focus on engaging post-secondary students in the boarder community and exploring unique ways to retain talent in the community, will contribute to the local economy, to a greater sense of belonging within the community, and greater engagement in culture. Similarly, increasing community access to culture and cultural assets on post-secondary campuses, such as concerts, lectures, art galleries and museums, creates additional opportunities for residents. Working collaboratively with post-secondary institutions, the community and other stakeholders, and building on the IBM Smarter Cities project for the Northdale neighbourhood, will reduce the sense of division between on and off-campus life in Waterloo.

The town and gown committee will be a valuable resource to help with these efforts.

Corporate lead: Community services department/community & neighbourhood services unit
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

****4.4 Work closely with youth and youth service providers to develop meaningful opportunities for youth-focused cultural experiences.**

Residents, of all ages, should have opportunities to develop creativity and pursue cultural activities. From childhood to older age, the urge to be creative is a shared human experience and a community that provides outlets for creativity is one that will be healthy and prosper. Waterloo has been designated an Age Friendly Community, and is focused on making Waterloo a place in which all residents of all ages can be fully engaged in the social life of the community.

Through consultation with the community, a desire to ensure more cultural opportunities of interest to various age groups was expressed. A particular gap was identified in cultural opportunities that are relevant and meaningful to youth in their teens and early twenties. Cultural programming for these age groups should focus on hands on opportunities that empower youth to create cultural works that tell their stories to the community. Some youth may be interested in conventional forms of cultural expression, such as theatre, painting or music; others may seek out less traditional but equally meaningful emerging art forms. As the diversity of Waterloo continues to increase, youth are also seeking connection to their familial culture and

access to opportunities to develop skills in traditional instruments, dance, food, and other art forms. A focus on youth can benefit the whole community as it can help retain young talent within Waterloo. While many youth desire to move to bigger Canadian cities like Toronto or Vancouver, youth will be more likely to remain in Waterloo if they can access the cultural opportunities they are seeking within their community.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit
Implementation timeline: Long-term (years 7-10)

4.5 Investigate opportunities to expand the city's fee assistance leisure access program for access to a broader range of cultural activities.

Currently, the City of Waterloo offers a fee assistance leisure access program, for families who qualify financially, to help enable participation in programs offered by the city or its affiliated organizations. Eligible Waterloo residents receive the assistance in the form of a credit.

The program is most commonly used for participation in minor sports and city recreation programs. Currently, opportunities to access arts activities through leisure access are limited to programs provided by the Waterloo Community Arts Center and the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery.

Community awareness of the opportunity to use this program for cultural activities is limited. Additionally, there are many forms of cultural activity that cannot be accessed through the current program, as no eligible provider is affiliated with the city. Given the desire expressed by the community to make culture accessible and inclusive for all residents, a review and expansion of the fee assistance leisure access program to allow access to a broader range of cultural activities should be pursued. This would give more residents, from children to older adults, the opportunity to engage in cultural activities that build their own creative potential.

To be successful, this expansion would require a well-articulated policy, increased promotion of the program, and additional cultural activity providers added to the current list of eligible programs. At present the program is funded by the City of Waterloo, Region of Waterloo's community outreach program and the Canadian Tire Foundation for Families jumpstart program. To support the proposed expansion additional external funding sources may be required.

Corporate lead: Community services department/business services unit
Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

4.6 Work with Aboriginal stakeholders to share Aboriginal culture and heritage with the broader community.

As the first inhabitants of the land Waterloo calls home, Aboriginal history is an inseparable part of the story of Waterloo. A number of different tribes have inhabited the area over the last 500 years including the Attawandaron Nation, Six Nations and Iroquois. While there is no on-reserve

community within Waterloo Region, Statistics Canada census data from 2006 suggests that 4,810 Aboriginal people live in the region.

While there is a long standing relationship between St Paul's University College and the Aboriginal community, as seen in the annual Pow Wow held at the University of Waterloo and other programs offered at the college, there has been little connection between the City of Waterloo and Aboriginal community organizations or residents. Discussion with Aboriginal organization leaders in the region uncovered that a stronger relationship with the city is desired. Aboriginal community leaders are looking for opportunities to access city recreation facilities and parks for culture events, for more opportunities to share their culture with the broader community, and to feel more welcome in the community.

While the Mennonite and German heritage of the city is a vivid part of local heritage storytelling, the stories of the region's Aboriginal heritage have not been broadly shared.

As a first step, the City of Waterloo Museum presents an opportunity to share the story of the community's Aboriginal heritage, both before and since European settlement. An exhibit at the museum could focus on recognizing the significant contributions Aboriginal residents have made to the development of Waterloo and surrounding area. This exhibit would not only provide an opportunity to share heritage stories, but also provide a starting point for the city to build a stronger relationship with the local Aboriginal community. Moving forward, additional opportunities to grow relationships with the local Aboriginal community, and to share the community's heritage and culture with the all residents, should be explored.

Corporate lead: Community services department

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

4.7 Explore strategies to provide for a diversity coordinator in the community programs & outreach division.

Alongside the development of a diversity strategy for the City of Waterloo, the establishment of a diversity coordinator will support community cohesion, inclusion, and sense of belonging.

The diversity coordinator should be responsible for outreach to Waterloo's diverse communities and to lead the implementation of the diversity strategy. This position would also be responsible for communicating internally within the corporation and externally with the community about the value of diversity and seek out opportunities to break down barriers to full social engagement. The diversity coordinator would act as a facilitator to understanding difference, building relationships that are respectful of difference, and fostering the value of diversity for the community.

New residents, and in particular new immigrants, to Waterloo identified barriers to participating in and contributing to Waterloo's culture. It can be difficult to find information about existing cultural opportunities and how to get involved. The city could play an information-sharing role to help connect new residents to cultural opportunities.

Like the proposed arts and culture coordinator, the diversity coordinator would act as a connector, facilitator, catalyst and door opener, providing support to diversity focused community organizations, and helping to establish relationships between community organizations and the full diversity of our population. This could include working with existing multicultural and settlement organizations to share information about culture, heritage and recreation opportunities in Waterloo or working with city staff to make city services and civic engagement processes more inclusive.

This position would need to work closely with the proposed arts and culture coordinator, and the existing inclusion coordinator, whose focus is on inclusion for persons with disabilities. By building stronger relationships with the full diversity of this community there will be greater opportunity to leverage the complete range of skills, knowledge and resources in the community to help achieve community goals and make Waterloo a welcoming and attractive place for all to live, work, learn, and play.

Corporate lead: Community services department/community programs and outreach division
Implementation timeline: Medium-term (years 4-6)

4.8 Identify funding to ensure the Button Factory, a significant heritage building and cultural institution in Waterloo, meets the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.

The Roschman Button Factory, built in 1886, is now home to the Waterloo Community Arts Centre (WCAC) founded in 1993. This heritage-designated building is located in the uptown core, across the street from city hall. The Button Factory is a cultural anchor for the city; however, the building is not compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) requirements. There are many residents who cannot fully participate in WCAC programming due to physical barriers, such as the dilapidated exterior ramp and lack of an elevator for second and third floor access. Making the building accessible will demonstrate the city's commitment to accessibility for all residents. Improving accessibility at the Button Factory will help to ensure that the Waterloo Community Arts Centre can continue to serve as a focal point for cultural development and engagement for all residents, and will demonstrate the city's leadership in making cultural assets accessible to all residents. It is hoped that this leadership will spill over into other cultural aspects like events and areas like uptown Waterloo where many shops and restaurants are currently not accessible.

Corporate lead: Corporate services department/facilities & fleet division
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3) to medium-term (years 4-6)

Goal 5: Expand community awareness and appreciation of culture.

One of the primary challenges the community identified around culture is a lack of awareness of local culture opportunities. At a basic level, there has been a lack of coordinated communication. Waterloo is home to local talent (both amateur and professional) and there are a lot of events going on, but people do not always know about them or how to find out about them. The challenges faced with connecting potential cultural consumers are a significant barrier to local cultural development. Making audience connections are critical to supporting artists and performers in their work.

But the issue goes beyond simply getting the word out to increase ticket sales or sell artwork. Beyond communicating what is happening and when, there is a need for a bigger ongoing discussion about culture in the community. This exchange will help build a stronger appreciation for culture and how it can contribute to quality of life, both at an individual and at a community level. A collective dialogue will foster cooperation and learning from each other about the importance of creativity, imagination, and beauty.

Discussing, promoting and educating about culture and its importance to the community will contribute toward a more engaged community that can appreciate the rich cultural experiences available and therefore will provide greater support for its ongoing development. If the community appreciates and recognizes themselves in culture through the opportunities to engage in it, they are more likely to take part and contribute.

The city's communication opportunities do not end here, Waterloo will also benefit by communicating to the rest of the world about local cultural strengths. This will benefit both cultural creators and the economic prosperity of the community as a whole. There is also a need to communicate not just about the cultural strengths of today, but also where we are planning to go, and the city's contribution to moving forward.

Waterloo is a busy, hardworking community with a strong commitment to children, family life and older adults. But in the midst of responsibilities at work and home, residents can benefit from taking the time to listen to live music, attend a theater performance, go to a community festival, read a book, or spend some reflective time at a museum or gallery. In making the time for cultural engagement, we will not only support cultural workers, but will also create an opportunity for cultural workers to do what they do best – to inspire us, to make us think, to energize us, and to allow us to dream.

The recommendations below identify ways that the city can contribute to both improving community awareness of opportunities for cultural engagement and participation, and supporting the broader community dialogue about the importance of culture in Waterloo.

Recommendations:

****5.1 Promote local culture to residents.**

Great cultural events happen in Waterloo, however, there is an ongoing sense that a lack of awareness exists about what is happening. Getting the word out is critical to audience development for a vibrant cultural scene. The community is looking for easy ways to find out what is happening - communication about culture is a prerequisite to engaging in culture. If we know about what is available, we are more likely to take part. Creating more references to culture, contributes to a critical mass of awareness that culture happens here.

The city should take advantage of a number of opportunities to contribute to improving promotion of cultural events in Waterloo. While in the past there has not been a “one stop shop” for learning about cultural opportunities, the launch of grandsocial.ca by the Creative Enterprise Initiative (CEI) is working toward changing this. grandsocial.ca provides online resources where cultural content creators can promote themselves, their work, their organization, or their event, and community members can find out what is happening in Waterloo Region. As the site continues to grow and develop, it will include everything from coffee shops with art exhibits to information about concerts featuring internationally recognized musicians. The City of Waterloo has the opportunity to support the ongoing development of grandsocial.ca as the response to the community's desire for a “one stop shop” resource of information on culture through its continued funding of the CEI and by collaborating with the CEI on the ongoing growth of the behind-the-scenes database. If the community continues to latch on to grandsocial.ca as their source for information for what is happening it will reduce the amount of time culture creators and organizations need to spend on promotion and will reduce duplication of efforts, leaving more time and resources for creation of content.

The city can also help promote culture by increasing opportunities for cultural promotion in the uptown. Approaches could include low tech options like a community bulletin board, or developing an inventory of shops, restaurants, and businesses in uptown that allow postings, to technological approaches like digital signage. Focusing promotion of culture in the uptown makes sense as the area continues to grow as the cultural heart of the community.

City facilities also provide a venue for cultural promotion. Free or low cost opportunities for cultural event promotion could be created within RIM Park, the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex, the Visitor & Heritage Information Center and other city facilities open to the community. These facilities are community-gathering spaces that provide an ideal locale to share information.

The city's website and social media feeds are also a growing resource for promoting culture, particularly related to the Waterloo Public Square, the City of Waterloo Museum and city-supported festivals. The website and social media feeds could also be used to share cultural success stories about Waterloo residents and organizations, receiving local, national, or international acclaim.

In defining the city's role in local cultural development, a strong emphasis has been placed on leadership and demonstrating the city's consistent commitment to achieving the community's vision for culture. Part of this leadership role requires communicating this commitment to culture to the community on an ongoing basis. This could happen through a promotional campaign for culture; creating ongoing opportunities to talk about local culture and its future; engaging the community in implementation of the culture plan; and regularly reporting back to the community on what has been achieved during the implementation process.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit with corporate services department/communications division

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10)

****5.2 Promote Waterloo's local cultural assets and strengths as tools to attract and retain global interest.**

Cultural institutions, organizations, artists, and icons define world-class cities. They help tell the world a city's story. To support the cultural community and to bring widespread attention to the high quality of local arts, culture, and heritage, Waterloo must tell the rest of world about these assets.

The quality of local culture and heritage assets should be profiled in marketing and promotional materials produced by the city, whether their purpose is tourism, business and employer attraction, talent attraction and retention, or major event bid opportunities.

The City of Waterloo should proudly tell the story of the local cultural landscape to compete globally. Ultimately culture is what makes a place interesting, engaging and memorable. Local culture will help to encourage tourists, employers, students, as well as cultural creators to come to Waterloo to live, work, learn and play. In turn, more visitors to the area will bring increased consumption of cultural products, thereby supporting the growth of local cultural organizations and artists of all kinds.

To have the greatest success in communicating local cultural assets and unique cultural experiences to the world, collaboration with key stakeholders such as Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Corporation, the UpTown Business Improvement Area, the Creative Enterprise Initiative, the Kitchener-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce, and the technology sector and incubator programs will be needed.

Corporate lead: Economic development department

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

5.3 Elevate the profile of the arts, culture, festivals and events division and its staff within the corporation and within the community.

When the recreation & leisure services master plan was developed, the community indicated that culture staff needed a higher profile within the recreation and leisure services department. This contributed to changing the department name to community, culture and recreation services.

In the 2013 reorganization of the city's corporate structure, the arts, culture, festival and event team was transferred to the economic development department. This move is an indication that the city has embraced the importance of culture to a strong economy and a high quality of life. However, the word "culture" no longer appears within the new department title. Concern has been expressed by community stakeholders that without recognition of "culture" in a department title, the importance of culture will be lost. It has also been indicated that culture should not be seen solely as a tool for economic development; culture also contributes to community development, and should be valued from an "art for art's sake" perspective acknowledging that culture has intrinsic value apart from any utilitarian purpose. A department name change to "economic and culture development" would reinforce both internally and externally that culture is important to the city. It would mark a philosophical shift that recognizes culture as a key factor requiring city attention in order to achieve a vital and sustainable community. Additionally, all staff in this department should look for opportunities to contribute to local cultural development.

Further to the department name change, locating culture staff in a storefront or street level workspace would help ensure that staff is more visible to the community and would improve community access to staff for collaborative ventures. Community members would have accessible contact to ask questions, find out about resources, and make connections. This kind of visible office space and community access aligns with the city's role in culture as facilitator and catalyst of local cultural development. A street front space could also be shared with other city staff that regularly collaborate with the broader community, or with staff from other organizations working towards cultural goals within the community. The community wishes to see culture remain a visible priority for the city.

Corporate lead: Economic development department

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

Goal 6: Foster collaborations in the culture sector.

While this culture plan is focused on the role of the City of Waterloo in supporting local cultural development, it is clear that the community's vision for culture can only be achieved through broad collaboration with:

- individual artists and culture workers;
- culture organizations and institutions; and
- other community stakeholders with an interest in making Waterloo an even better place to live, learn, work and play.

Collaboration can leverage existing resources for community benefit. Collaboration begins with getting people together and starting to build relationships. These initial relationships can develop and grow into a shared focus on common goals. In order for the implementation of the culture plan to be a success, collaboration will need to occur not only between the city and cultural organizations, but also between business, education and other sectors within the community. Alliance will be the most effective way to build a vibrant culture in Waterloo.

Recommendations:

****6.1 Pursue opportunities to build relationships and partnerships between the culture sector and other sectors of the local economy, with a focus on funding and support.**

Waterloo is well-known for its technology, post-secondary education, finance and insurance sectors, among others. These components of Waterloo's economy have played a major role in helping to keep Waterloo prosperous during difficult economic times.

Those in the culture sector, from individual artists to larger institutions, noted during the public consultation process that other sectors of our economy could contribute to local cultural development in a number of ways, be it through funding for culture activities, mentorship opportunities, in-kind support, or professional development and business development skills. Cross-sector collaboration will help culture workers and organizations achieve their goals.

Of course, this is not about a one way relationship of giving to the culture sector. It must be about developing long-term relationships and partnerships of mutual benefit for both the culture sector and other sectors of the local economy.

Stakeholders in our business, education and technology sectors can benefit from their support of the culture sector in many ways. Supporting cultural development in Waterloo will contribute to making Waterloo a more appealing place to live to the talented employees companies are looking to attract and retain. Those in the culture sector can also act as sources of creative inspiration or input. By working together, and identifying shared values and goals, win-win partnerships will from.

While some of these relationships are currently happening in the region, new and more in-depth partnerships are needed. City staff could help identify new cross sector opportunities and work

with partners such as the Creative Enterprise Initiative to facilitate their development. Progress in this area will help address the funding challenges faced within the culture sector, helping to ensure that our local artists, culture workers, cultural organizations and institutions, along with their boards members and volunteers, are not only sustainable over the long term, but also have the skills and resources to be resilient in the face of change.

This is truly about harnessing the wealth of expertise and resources within the community to achieve shared goals.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit with corporate services department/finance division

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10)

****6.2 Initiate discussions with leaders of educational and research facilities containing performing arts venues to find ways to improve community access and foster community use.**

During the public engagement process it was noted that Waterloo is fortunate to be home to high caliber post-secondary institutions and world-renowned research institutes. The existence of these institutions and the inspiration their presence provide to the community are part of what makes Waterloo a great place to live.

These institutions are also home to facilities that could be used for the performing arts. In particular, community members recalled that in the past the Humanities Theatre at the University of Waterloo was a common venue for a wide variety of performances open to the public, but noted that in recent years this practice has changed. Community members also noted that there is space in the Perimeter Institute that could be used to the benefit of the whole community. Use of the Centre for International Governance Innovation for events like the Wild Writers Literary Festival is an example of the way these institutions can support local culture. The community suggested that greater access to these venues for broad community use would further enhance the value and contribution of these organizations to the community, and would help meet the need for additional performance space in Waterloo. The city, in collaboration with other community leaders, could lead discussions to foster increased community access and use of these cultural assets.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

6.3 Organize and host a bi-annual cultural summit.

Waterloo's culture community is fragmented. Organizations with similar mandates and individuals working in the same discipline may not necessarily be connected to each other. Fragmentation means that opportunities to share knowledge and resources, or to partner on projects, may be lost, and it is more difficult to work toward common goals. The community

indicated that the city could play an important role in relationship building among culture organizations and culture creators.

The city's involvement in relationship building could range from informal opportunities that arise during the day-to-day work of staff, to more formal approaches. Hosting a bi-annual cultural summit would provide a formal, planned opportunity to bring together a cross section of artists, culture workers, and culture organizations and institutions, from all creative disciplines that contribute to local culture, along with culture supporters in the community. The summit should provide an avenue to continue the dialogue with the city about culture planning and for attendees to share ideas and discuss challenges. It should allow staff to share updates on the implementation of the culture plan. It should also provide an opportunity for those new to the culture scene in Waterloo to get to know the long time players and to make important connections with cultural leaders. It should be an opportunity to celebrate successes. The culture summit should also include opportunities for information sharing and skills development. While the culture summit should include a formal agenda, it should also provide opportunities for informal networking that jumpstart new relationships and collaborations.

Staff should pursue opportunities to collaborate with neighbouring municipalities and the region, as well as the Creative Enterprise Initiative, to host the summit, for greater impact across the region. This could involve rotating the geographic location of the summit around the region, and rotating responsibility for organizing the summit.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit
Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

6.4 Initiate a regional conversation about the need for a community arts council.

In general, community arts councils (CACs) exist for one or more of the following purposes to:

- promote the arts;
- provide programs that connect residents with culture; and
- advocate for and help support artists and arts organizations

Some communities in Ontario have seen their arts councils make a significant contribution to the cultural landscape, as has been the case in the City of London in recent years. Many CACs, even those with extremely limited resources, are doing significant work to champion arts and culture. Some have an impressive track record, and a number of communities can credit their local CAC with fostering new cultural spaces, creating arts events in the community, or initiating programs that are making their cities or towns more arts-friendly. Others communities have seen their arts council disappear, as they have lacked the resources to be successful. The former arts council in Waterloo Region is a case in point.

Cultural organizations have indicated that there are local connectivity and advocacy needs that an arts council representing the entire Region of Waterloo could address. On the other hand, there is concern that resurrecting an arts council model might make the landscape more confusing and challenging, particularly with understanding the distribution of roles and

responsibilities between government, the Creative Enterprise Initiative and a possible arts council. A region wide discussion on the need for an arts council with a focus on benefits and limitations, and assessment of various models of operation, would require participation from all levels of local government in the region, as well as cultural organizations.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit

Implementation timeline: Long-term (years 7-10)

6.5 Continue to support the goals of the Waterloo Community Arts Centre and the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery.

The Waterloo Community Arts Centre and the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery have been identified as the city's flagship cultural institutions. The City of Waterloo has a special relationship with these organizations, not only because the organizations are physically located within Waterloo, but also because they inhabit municipally owned buildings. Historically, the city has acknowledged this relationship by having city staff connected to the board of directors of both organizations. As both of these institutions offer opportunities to support local culture growth it makes sense for the city to be highly engaged with these institutions to ensure awareness of organizations' goals and to focus on supporting their success.

Corporate lead: Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit

Implementation timeline: Short-term (years 1-3)

Implementation Plan

This plan provides direction for momentum. Some elements of the plan are easily achievable in the short-term. The horizon is constantly changing, and agility is needed to achieve the direction of the vision statement. Taking action will make it a reality.

This is a 10-year plan. It is understood that time is needed to make the recommended changes and to see the impact of those changes in the community.

The chart below includes all 37 recommendations and provides guidelines for when implementation of each recommendation should begin. Each is identified for implementation over the next 10 years with work beginning in either the short-term (years 1-3), medium-term, (years 4-6) or long-term (years 7-10). This timeline recognizes that some projects can be completed in months, while others will take multiple years to complete or work will proceed on an ongoing basis.

The chart also identifies which city department and/or division should lead the implementation of each recommendation. Financial considerations are included. Each recommendation is identified for implementation within existing resources (which includes staff resource or existing budgets) or requiring new funding, be in one-time or continuous. For many of the recommendations additional planning is required to determine the financial requirements. New funding requests will be referred to a future budget process for consideration or alternate funding arrangements, outside of the municipal tax base, will be pursued where possible.

Goal 1: Uncover and build community capacity for creativity, expression and cultural engagement.

Recommendations	Corporate lead	Implementation Timeline	Financial considerations	Comments
**1.1 Institute a culture policy for the City of Waterloo that reflects the community's vision.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources	
**1.2 Explore strategies to add an arts & culture coordinator position in the arts, culture, festivals & events unit.	Economic development department	Short-term (years 1-3)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requesting one full-time staff position • Consider grant funding opportunities for short term implementation via a contract position • Refer ongoing staff position funding to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration

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**1.3 Develop a municipal cultural investment strategy with a range of funding and support types.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit with community services department/community programming & outreach services division	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May require reallocation of existing funds
**1.4 Increase the City of Waterloo's capacity to support collaborative festivals and events	Economic development department	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration
1.5 Review existing bylaws, permits, guidelines and associated processes with a view to considering broad community values and allowing for cultural vibrancy.	Community services department/municipal enforcement services division	Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 4-6)	Existing resources	
1.6 Explore innovative ways to integrate and fund city-supported cultural activities and assets.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit with corporate services department/finance division	Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10)	Existing resources	
1.7 Undertake a study of the space needs for culture workers and cultural activities, and identify innovative, cost effective approaches to better meet local space needs.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & event unit	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - One time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources

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Goal 2: Strengthen the community’s cultural heritage identity by uniting Waterloo’s past, with its present and future through management and education.

Recommendations	Corporate lead	Implementation Timeline	Financial considerations	Comments
**2.1 Develop a strategy for built heritage, supported by a permanent heritage planner position.	Integrated planning & public works department/growth management division	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources, New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources already allocated from Heritage Reserve Fund for developing built heritage strategy Requesting one full-time staff position Refer ongoing staff position funding to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration
**2.2 Develop a strategy that encompasses growth and long-term management for the City of Waterloo Museum & archival collections.	Community services department/museum & archival collections unit	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources already allocated from Heritage Reserve Fund for developing strategy
2.3 Increase programming capacity to recognize heritage as a strong educational component of culture.	Community services department/museum & archival collections unit	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change existing two part-time positions to two full-time positions Refer ongoing staff position funding to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration Identify possible alternate funding sources
2.4 Digitize the city’s heritage collections to provide online access.	Community services department/museum & archival collections unit	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will require significant upfront resources to digitize the existing collection and some ongoing financial support to keep digitized records up to date Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration Identify possible alternate funding sources

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<p>2.5 Continue development of the series of provincial standards for community museums to support the City of Waterloo Museum.</p>	<p>Community services department/museum & archival collections unit</p>	<p>Short-term (years 1-3)</p>	<p>Existing resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once series of standards are completed, an increased opportunity will exist to access provincial funding to support the city's museum
<p>2.6 Identify and designate local cultural heritage landscapes as a part of the city's place-making approach to city building.</p>	<p>Integrated planning & public works department/growth management division</p>	<p>Long-term (years 7-10)</p>	<p>New funding - Continuous</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources

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Goal 3: Enliven streets, neighbourhoods, public and green spaces.

Recommendations	Corporate lead	Implementation Timeline	Financial considerations	Comments
**3.1 Develop a neighbourhood strategy that explores opportunities to create a distinct sense of identity and culture at a neighbourhood level.	Community services department/community & neighbourhood services unit with business services unit	Short-term (years 1-3)	New funding - One time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration Identify possible alternate funding sources
**3.2 Develop a list of desired cultural assets and the preferred locations to assist with long-term planning and when processing development applications under the Planning Act.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Medium-term (years 4-6)	Existing resources	
**3.3 Continue to make progress on place-making initiatives in the UpTown core.	Economic development department with integrated planning & public works department	Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10)	Existing resources, New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements UpTown Streetscape Improvement project Waterloo Park frontage project
**3.4 Plan for and continue to invest in the development of the Waterloo Public Square over the long term.	Economic development department with integrated planning & public works department	Short-term (years 1-3) to medium-term (years 4-6)	Existing resources, New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration Identify possible alternate funding sources
**3.5 Develop a joint initiative to explore the potential for temporary use of empty retail spaces in the UpTown as spaces for cultural expression and animation.	Economic development department	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration Identify possible alternate funding sources

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3.6 Develop a public art program.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources
3.7 Establish a municipal artist-in-residence program.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Short-term (years 1-3)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources
3.8 Involve regional artists, wherever possible, in the design of public infrastructure projects to incorporate artistic elements into the heritage of the future.	Integrated planning & public works department	Short-term (years 1-3) to medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources

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Goal 4: Enhance engagement of community diversity to build a stronger, shared sense of belonging.

Recommendations	Corporate lead	Implementation Timeline	Financial considerations	Comments
**4.1 Develop a diversity strategy.	Community services department/business services unit with community & neighbourhood services unit	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - One time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources
**4.2 Initiate a community-driven, multicultural event focusing on performance and arts with an accompanying symposium.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources
**4.3 Work closely with post-secondary institutions and associated stakeholders to break down barriers between campuses and the community.	Community services department/community & neighbourhood services unit	Short-term (years 1-3)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources
**4.4 Work closely with youth and youth service providers to develop meaningful opportunities for youth-focused cultural experiences.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Long-term (years 7-10)	Existing resources	

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4.5 Investigate opportunities to expand the city's fee assistance leisure access program for access to a broader range of cultural activities.	Community services department/business services unit	Medium-term (years 4-6)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements • Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration • Identify possible alternate funding sources
4.6 Work with Aboriginal stakeholders to share Aboriginal culture and heritage with the broader community.	Community services department	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources	
4.7 Explore strategies to provide for a diversity coordinator in the community programs & outreach division.	Community services department/community programs and outreach division	Medium-term (years 4-6)	Existing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-alignment of existing staff resources may be an option to fulfill this position
4.8 Identify funding to ensure the Button Factory, a significant heritage building and cultural institution in Waterloo, meets the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.	Corporate services department/facilities & fleet division	Short-term (years 1-3) to medium-term (years 4-6)	Existing resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently in 2021 budget forecast • Consider reallocating to the 2015 budget process

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Goal 5: Expand community awareness and appreciation of culture.

Recommendations	Corporate lead	Implementation Timeline	Financial considerations	Comments
**5.1 Promote local culture to residents.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit with corporate services department/communications division	Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10)	Existing resources, New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing resources can be leveraged for immediate action Additional planning required to determine long-term financial requirements Phased in approach required Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration
**5.2 Promote Waterloo's local cultural assets and strengths as tools to attract and retain global interest.	Economic development department	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources	
5.3 Elevate the profile of the arts, culture, festivals and events division and its staff within the corporation and within the community.	Economic development department	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources	

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Goal 6: Foster collaborations in the culture sector.

Recommendations	Corporate lead	Implementation Timeline	Financial considerations	Comments
**6.1 Pursue opportunities to build relationships and partnerships between the culture sector and other sectors of the local economy, with a focus on funding and support.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit with corporate services department/finance division	Short-term (years 1-3) to long-term (years 7-10)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional planning required to determine resources requirements Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration
**6.2 Initiate discussions with leaders of educational and research facilities containing performing arts venues to find ways to improve community access and foster community use.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources	
6.3 Organize and host a bi-annual cultural summit.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Short-term (years 1-3)	New funding - Continuous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal financial requirement to support event hosting Refer to the 2015 budget process, and future budget processes, for consideration Identify possible alternate funding sources
6.4 Initiate a regional conversation about the need for a Community Arts Council.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Long-term (years 7-10)	Existing resources	
6.5 Continue to support the goals of the Waterloo Community Arts Centre and the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery.	Economic development department/arts, culture, festivals & events unit	Short-term (years 1-3)	Existing resources	

Community members have identified issues around the implementation of this plan that need to be kept in mind:

1. Flexibility

There may be opportunities to implement a recommendation sooner than anticipated, or circumstances may mean a shift in approach will be needed. Flexibility will be required to make progress.

2. Innovation



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There will be unexpected opportunities that arise over the next ten years that support the community's vision. These should be enthusiastically pursued if a clear connection can be made to moving the culture agenda forward.

3. Integration

Internal change across the Corporation of the City of Waterloo will be critical to success. Cross-departmental synergy and a cultural lens will support decision-making that positively impacts local culture. The city will need to be willing to think and act in ways that are responsive to the community's vision.

Several of the recommendations contained in this plan will directly support the implementation process:

- the development of a culture policy (recommendation 1.1) will reinforce the need for action and support the use of a cultural lens in decision-making across the corporation;
- the bi-annual cultural summits (recommendation 6.3) will provide a regular opportunity for ongoing dialogue about culture planning and reporting on successes;
- continuing to work with the Creative Enterprise Initiative on the inventory of cultural assets (recommendation 1.7) will support culture mapping and culture planning work;
- a focus on collaboration (recommendation 6.1) will support building on expertise in the community and using resources wisely;
- acknowledgement that a range of approaches to funding will be needed (recommendation 1.3), with help ensure the implementation is appropriately resourced.

To launch implementation of the culture plan the following immediate steps are recommended:

1. Adopt the plan in principle – Council's endorsement of the vision, guiding principles, goals and recommendations set out in the plan as a framework for future action, will serve as a signal that culture is a priority in the city's planning, policy and service delivery.
2. Establish an internal cross-departmental staff committee that will act as champions to collaboratively carry out implementation. The committee should begin by establishing terms of reference and a work plan for the first two to three years of the plan. Subcommittees may be formed to best use staff resources for specific initiatives.

This committee must include staff from the following areas:

- Economic development
- Community programming & outreach services
- Communications
- Engineering services
- Environment & parks services
- Facilities & fleet
- Finance
- Growth management
- Municipal enforcement services
- Planning approvals
- Recreation & facility services

Senior leadership for implementation of the plan will be the executive director of economic development.

3. The plan should be widely communicated both internally across all departments and throughout the community to help develop greater understanding of the city's role in supporting local cultural development. This should also focus on encouraging community engagement and collaboration to support implementation of the plan.
4. Conduct a joint implementation planning exercise with the Creative Enterprise Initiative, other local governments, and key stakeholders to discuss the recommendations requiring collaboration.
5. Residents indicated that measuring the impact of culture plan implementation was important, and that this information should be shared with the community. A plan for measuring the impact of culture plan implementation and report regularly to council and the community on progress, successes and challenges, is needed.

Indicators selected to measure the impact of the culture plan should consider data source availability and comparability to other communities. The Canadian Urban Institute's Municipal Cultural Planning Indicators and Performance Measures Guidebook (2011) is a valuable source of information. The report to the community could take the form of an easy to understand report card or infographic.

Glossary

Art: The creation of beautiful or thought-provoking objects or experiences. The purpose of art is to express or stimulate ideas or emotions. Art is unique and original. Art can be functional, but is not necessarily functional. Art can take many forms including visual arts, literary arts, performance arts, media arts, and design arts.

Artist: A person who engages in an activity deemed to be an art; a person who uses imagination, talent, or skill to create works that may be judged to have an aesthetic value; a person who creates places for some human purpose, creates extraordinary versions of ordinary objects; gives tangible form to the unknown; gives tangible form to feelings; or refreshes our vision and helps to see the world in new ways.

Collection: The natural or cultural objects and intellectual property directly owned by a museum, as a public trust, and registered as part of its permanent collection, to be used for the exclusive purposes of preservation, research and presentation to the public.

Community: Can be made up of a number of neighbourhoods, which collectively identify with community levels of service such as community centres, cultural centres, heritage facilities, libraries, museums, commercial and/or industrial districts, local and regional schools, community halls, etc. They can also be created through commonalities such as geographic location, interests, demographics, shared cultural heritage, or simply the desire to come together. In the context of cultural planning and development, “community” usually describes both a physical place, and the more subjective feeling of identity and belonging.¹⁵

Community Capacity: The ability of community members to use assets in the community to improve local quality of life. Each community's collection of assets is unique and reflects the specific characteristics of the population, political structures and geography.¹⁶ Building community capacity requires strong facilitation to develop collaborative approaches, engage the skills and knowledge of individuals, resolve issues, and manage change with the intention of strengthening the community.¹⁷

Community Development: A comprehensive approach to local development that involves managing community change by involving citizens in a process of defining what must be done and facilitating their participation in achieving these ends.¹⁸

Culture Sector: Includes individual artists, and other culture workers, organizations or institutions with a primary focus in arts, culture and/or heritage.

¹⁵ Creative Together: A Cultural Plan for the City of Vaughan (2010).

¹⁶ Community Capacity. (1999). In Mental Health Promotion Tool Kit: A practical resource for community initiatives, Canadian Mental Health Association, Retrieved from: <http://www.cmha.ca>

¹⁷ Adapted from Creative Together: A Cultural Plan for the City of Vaughan (2010).

¹⁸ Ibid.

Culture Workers: Individuals involved directly or in support services in the production, presentation and distribution of cultural products.¹⁹

Cultural Hub: An innovative platform for combining the necessary hard and soft infrastructure to support the space and programming needs of commercial, not-for-profit and community sectors.²⁰

Creativity: A generative process of self-expression or thinking which involves the generation and incubation of ideas and the illumination, confirmation and production of something new. This can be the generation of new ideas or concepts or new associations between existing ideas or concepts.²¹

Cultural Development: A process which supports and facilitates cultural resource development and includes skilled creators, artists and craftspeople as transmitters of aesthetic expression, ideas, aspirations and values in relation to the sociological, economic, environmental and creative aspects of their communities.²²

Cultural Planning: A process for leveraging a community's cultural resources to support economic development and the integration of culture across all facets of municipal planning and decision-making in Ontario. The Ontario Municipal Cultural Planning Partnership defines municipal cultural planning as: "The strategic and integrated planning and use of cultural resources for economic and community development." The Government of Ontario encourages municipalities to integrate cultural planning into their daily business; to emphasize local arts, cultural industries, heritage and libraries as they plan for economic development and the future of their communities. This means including culture as part of public planning and considering culture when planning for municipal priorities such as: land-use; tourism; youth engagement; economic development; transportation and downtown revitalization projects.²³

Diversity: A concept that encompasses acceptance and respect of individual differences. This could include: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, family structure, occupation, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. Understanding is key to embracing and celebrating differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment.

Heritage: A broad concept that encompasses the natural, indigenous and historic or cultural inheritance. It is the art, objects, buildings, traditions, and beliefs that a society considers important to its history.

Intensification: Increasing intensification of existing built-up areas with a focus on urban growth centres, intensification corridors, major transit station areas, brownfield sites and greyfields in order to ensure the building of healthy and balanced communities and maintaining

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Adapted from Artscape. Retrieved from: <http://torontoartscape.org>

²¹ Creative Together: A Cultural Plan for the City of Vaughan (2010).

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

and improving quality of life.²⁴

LRT: Abbreviation for the Region of Waterloo rapid transit system that will connect the three major urban centres of the cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo. Light rail transit (LRT) features electric trains running along tracks on a rapid way separate from regular traffic.²⁵ The LRT system under development has been branded ION.

LGBTTIQQ2SA: An abbreviation used to represent a broad array of identities such as, but not limited to, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, questioning, two-spirited and allies.²⁶

Museum: A permanent establishment, open to the public at regular hours and administered in the public interest for the purpose of collecting, preserving, studying, interpreting, assembling, and exhibiting to the public, for its instruction and enjoyment, objects and specimens of cultural value, including artistic, scientific (whether animate or inanimate), historical, and technical material.²⁷

Place-making: The collaboration with community residents, government and the private sector in the process of enhancing or revitalizing existing places in the community. These public/private efforts can result in design improvements that fundamentally transform a community's facilities, sites, street life and sense of well-being.²⁸

Policy: A consolidated statement of vision, purpose, goals, and objectives for the description and development of activity, production, services, and related resources.²⁹

Public Art: Works of art in any form that have been planned, executed and exhibited in a public space that is accessible to all.

Public Art Program: Public Art programs involve the commissioning, acquisition, installation, and maintenance of works of art in any medium for temporary or permanent placement in a prominent indoor or outdoor setting. Artworks are commissioned through a public process and panels comprised of professional visual artists along with community and city representatives evaluate the artist applicants. City's usually steward and maintain artworks through an ongoing program of coordinated conservation activities, inspections, restorative work and routine maintenance. Some programs specify 1% of eligible city capital improvement project funds are allocated for the commission, purchase and installation of artworks in a variety of settings. A second important aspect of public art programs is facilitating community public art, which involves submission from the community to undertake projects for the beautification of neighbourhoods and can be done in partnership with the private sector.³⁰

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Rapid Transit Region of Waterloo. Retrieved from: <http://rapidtransit.regionofwaterloo.ca/en>

²⁶ Adapted from World Pride 2014 Media Toolkit. Retrieved from: <http://www.worldpridetoronto.com/>

²⁷ Canadian Museum Association. Retrieved from: <http://www.museums.ca/>

²⁸ Creative Together: A Cultural Plan for the City of Vaughan (2010).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

Public Spaces: Places frequented by the general public including, but not limited to, the interior (foyers, concourses, outer offices, waiting rooms, conference rooms, council chambers, sports and recreation facilities, city offices) and exterior of city owned buildings. Public areas also include, but are not limited to, other exterior spaces owned by the city such as parks, cemeteries, civic gathering spaces, shared neighbourhood spaces, boulevards, streets and bridges.

Urban Design Guidelines: A document that provides design principles and specific guidelines for a range of development types and conditions for the built environment. These can address issues pertaining to public realm and private realm development within the context of environmental sustainability and can include important policies for the inclusion of cultural amenities and elements.³¹

³¹ Adapted from Creative Together: A Cultural Plan for the City of Vaughan (2010).

Appendix A: Resource Documents

The following is a list of the reports and other documents produced during the development of the culture plan. The working group used these reports and documents to develop the culture plan.

1. Planning context report
 - This report provided an overview of other city plans and policies with a connection to culture.
2. Current context report
 - This report provided an overview of the city's current role in local cultural development.
3. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats (SWOT) report
 - This report summarized findings gathered through the public consultation process during phase one of public consultation.
4. Culture summit report
 - This report summarized the input gathered during the culture plan summit held during phase one of public consultation.
5. Discussion guide summary
 - This document summarizes all of the input gathered using the discussion guide during phase one of public consultation.
6. Cultural identity (Waterloo's past, present, future) presentation
 - This presentation provided an overview of the cultural factors that shaped Waterloo's past and present, and will influence Waterloo's future, based on input from phase one of public consultations.
7. Demographic information presentation
 - This presentation provided an overview of the demographic profile of Waterloo.
8. Minutes of culture sector roundtable meetings
9. Minutes of citizens roundtable meetings
10. Minutes of working group meetings
11. Minutes of the project sponsor group meetings
12. Draft culture plan report
 - This report was presented to Council on July 15, 2013. Phase two of public consultation process focused on gathering feedback on this report.
13. Culture plan socials summary report



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- This report summarized the feedback on the draft culture plan report gathered during the two Culture Plan Social held as part of phase two of public consultation.

14. Phase 2 survey summary

- This document summarized the feedback on the draft culture plan report gathered through the online survey as part of phase two of public consultation.

Appendix B: Public Consultation Overview

Community engagement and input served as the foundation of the culture plan. The vision, goals, and recommendations speak directly to issues, needs and desires brought forward by the community. More than 700 community members provided feedback into the culture plan. A particular emphasis was placed on providing opportunities to actively engage all interested citizens, and to actively seek out feedback from the diversity of our community. Public consultation occurred in two phases.

Phase One

Phase one occurred in late summer/fall 2012. This phase focused on seeking community input to develop the plan. This phase of consultation included the following:

1. Meetings with various committees of council & other city committees

- Advisory committee on culture
- Municipal heritage committee
- Heritage advisory sub-committee
- Economic development committee
- Safe and healthy community advisory committee
- UpTown Waterloo vision committee
- Waterloo Park committee
- Waterloo citizens' environment advisory committee
- Youth recreation council
- 55 + advisory board
- Volunteer services advisory committee
- Town and gown committee

2. Targeted focus groups

- Diverse community leaders
- Sunnysdale immigrant women's group
- WLU faculty, staff and students
- UW faculty, staff and students
- Aboriginal community organization leaders
- Business sector leaders

3. Staff workshop sessions

- Museum and archive collections staff
- Arts, culture, festivals, & events staff
- All city staff (multiple sessions)

4. Meetings with various neighbourhood associations

- Laurelwood neighbourhood association
- Eastbridge neighbourhood association
- Mary Allen neighbourhood association
- Sunnysdale neighbourhood association
- Uptown west neighbourhood association

5. Discussion guide – available online and in hard copy

- Fair in the Square – culture plan consultation kick-off event held in the Waterloo Public Square
- Circulated to committees of council
- Promoted the guide at the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex and RIM Park, culture plan summit, Third Age Learning session, and through the Waterloo Community Arts Centre, Creative Enterprise Initiative, University of Waterloo, Conestoga College, Com-munitech, Waterloo Region Tourism Marketing Board, local faith communities, KW Chamber of Commerce, Waterloo Public Library, and through city staff to community or-ganizations.
- Promoted through City of Waterloo social media (Facebook, Twitter, website), as well as through handing out 500+ cards with the website address to access the guide online.

6. Culture plan summit

- One day workshop open to all residents

Phase Two

Phase two of the consultation process focused on gathering community feedback on the draft culture plan. Phase two occurred in fall 2013. This phase of consultation included:

1. Meeting with various committees of council & other city committees

- Advisory committee on culture
- Municipal heritage committee
- Heritage advisory sub-committee
- UpTown Waterloo vision committee
- Safe and healthy community advisory committee

2. Culture plan socials (open to all residents)

- Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery
- Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex

3. Staff Session

- Joint session with museum & archival collections and economic development staff

4. Online survey

- Promoted to:
 - all community groups consulted during phase one;
 - all residents that provided their email address on the discussion guide from phase one;
 - staff liaisons for advisory committees consulted during phase one;
 - participants of the culture plan social;
 - staff to community organizations;
 - all city staff
- Promoted through city's social media (Facebook, Twitter, website)

Appendix C: SWOT Report Summary

This report captured baseline information about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats around culture in the City of Waterloo. It is based on input gathered during the first phase of public consultation completed in summer/fall 2012.

Strengths:

Citizens take pride that Waterloo is a small city recognized on a world stage. Being labeled as an “Intelligent Community” has established prominence. There is recognition that local educational institutions are successful talent incubators and a means of fostering diversity. Innovative ideas are readily found outside the large technology sector in Waterloo. It is felt that there is a combination of optimism and an overall “can do” attitude that exists in Waterloo – this has been best coined as “barn raising” by Governor General David Johnston – reference to the Mennonite roots of the community and to a long standing history of communal problem solving. It has further been identified that the creative content found locally brings vibrancy and a strong sense of community to Waterloo. Individuals and unique entities like the Creative Enterprise Initiative spur new ideas that provide great benefit to the community.

There is recognition that the city and other local municipalities are placing more emphasis on culture. Signs of this include more investment in grants for culture organizations and the establishment of the City of Waterloo Museum at Conestoga Mall. The rotation of exhibits has helped to create interest in the museum’s new home. Further, a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the Waterloo Train Station heritage property funds are earmarked to create a heritage strategy in the near future. This will provide the city with new and innovative approaches to managing heritage assets.

In recent years, streetscapes and urban design have become important issues in Waterloo and are a subject of significant public debate. There is a strong sense of safety and walkability in the uptown. The Governor General Award Winning Perimeter Institute and the Centre for International Governance Innovation buildings are examples of contemporary architecture that contrasts with older architecture, such as the Button Factory. It is felt that the connection between built heritage and cultural expression helps to define Waterloo’s distinctive and evolving neighbourhoods.

Independent businesses such as Wordsworth Books, the Princess Cinemas, Starlight, and many others in the core are important entities with loyal supporters. Regina Street has an unharnessed energy to add further to the unique retail district in uptown.

There is also a sense that the community thrives on cultural animation in public spaces (e.g. Waterloo Public Square and Waterloo Park) and private spaces (e.g. porch parties, studio tours). Having accessible, free gathering places for diverse activities is a growing need. The city has numerous green spaces. It has been indicated that the public square is a blank slate that has become a central hub of activity in the community and Waterloo Park is also described as an important public asset. Retention and further development of these spaces is considered highly favourable. The events and festivals that take place in these spaces are a demonstration of sought after event-based culture and provide another source of identity. The relationships built with between arts, culture, festivals and events staff and public works services staff, as well as

corporate involvement and well-functioning committees are instrumental to the success of long-standing and newer events.

Weaknesses:

It has been identified that in Waterloo there is a focus on keeping the city orderly and tidy. While residents appreciate how clean and well maintained the city is, there is also a sense that this approach prevents less formalized, more organic or spontaneous forms of culture from taking place in the streets and public spaces. It is perceived that bylaws and regulations keep street performers and unique art forms out of the city. Opportunities for whimsical creative expression that contribute to a sense of the unexpected are considered desirable. Additionally, with the influx of intensification, buildings are felt to be quickly erected and lacking visual and streetscape appeal despite the urban design guidelines.

The barriers identified for culture sector workers focus on a lack of affordable space to live in Waterloo and a lack of space (affordable or existing) to produce their works. Comments suggest that the primary income for these individuals is gleaned from a “day” job, leaving less time and opportunity to pursue their talents. There is also little opportunity for live/work spaces.

Residents would prefer the city to consider new ideas that may have associated risks and have identified that investment and action are needed for culture to flourish.

There is a lack of integration with students. The large student population is sometimes associated with rundown, litter filled neighbourhoods. Though the world-class educational institutions draw talented students to this community, it is also felt there is little to retain that talent. Students tend to go home on weekends; move away for co-op terms and following graduation. It is perceived that students are not aware of what is happening off-campus.

Along this vein, a lack of nightlife for the 25-39 age demographic has been identified. The type of venues this age group are looking for (more upscale bars and restaurants than those that cater to post-secondary students) are lacking. Additionally, many businesses, such as uptown cafes close their doors at dusk.

Another perceived weakness is the lack of value placed on the history and heritage of this community. It is felt that this disinterest has led to the demolition of unique community sites. It is felt that more could be done to conserve different eras of built heritage, and to share information about heritage sites with the community, which might generate more interest.

It has been clearly articulated that the lack of theatre, performance and studio space within Waterloo is a significant shortfall. More investment in this area and increased support to allow the full operation of the City of Waterloo Museum is needed.

Opportunities:

The implementation of LRT is thought to be a largely positive means of moving people, thereby making travel to and from the uptown core more accessible. With LRT will come additional changes to urban design and an opportunity for the city to re-envision the areas around the LRT stations. These areas will provide opportunities for gathering spaces, public art, and local community development.



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Waterloo Public Square has been tremendously popular. It was identified that there is opportunity to further beautify this space with a water feature and greenery, as well as to further animate this space. It has also been expressed that there is room for more decentralized programming of open spaces in neighbourhoods and parks. Providing passive and programmed space is of interest to all age groups.

The public art is felt to be lackluster in Waterloo. There is an identified appetite for larger pieces and temporary pieces. Additionally, public art that is more accessible to the public, and allows opportunities for interaction are desired. It is felt that the percent for public art policy should be updated to better reflect broad community interests in art and to facilitate additional public art opportunities.

While the community feels strong ties to the local technology sector, there is also a sense that with recent downsizing, there is a need to revitalize the local economic identity to recognize the breadth of talents in the community as a source of strength moving forward.

It has been indicated that partnership creation is important to pursue. Specifically, the city has limited cultural facility assets. At one time, the Humanities Theatre had many performances available to the community. Regenerating access and joint programming on university campuses could be a way to reach students and create additional cultural capacity. Remembering that students are consumers of culture and producers of culture is key. Bringing culture to students on campus, providing them with opportunities to participate may be a way to engage students and bring them into the community. Marketing directly to students could have interesting outcomes both on campus and off campus.

Threats:

There is a lack of clarity on who to ask and how to proceed with required city licensing and permits. The City of Waterloo's busking permit, which has never been issued, requires a pre-planned, pre-paid reservation. This is a hurdle for street performers, which ultimately deters spontaneity.

It is felt that unless culture is raised to an appropriate level, and has a visionary leader within the city; it will continue to see a general lack of momentum. Further, there are lost opportunities due to a lack of joint initiatives with other local municipalities. Similarly, there is a sense of disconnect and perhaps competition between the many creators of culture in Waterloo. This gap may prevent using local assets to enable best outcomes.

There is concern that because culture is so diverse, that the culture plan cannot be all things, to all people. It will be important to prioritize where to place efforts, to manage expectations, and to work with stakeholders so that there is a sense of joint ownership for moving forward with local cultural development.

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If you have comments or questions about this draft municipal culture plan, please visit the project webpage: www.waterloo.ca/cultureplan or contact staff at: cultureplan@waterloo.ca