



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Community Arts Stakeholders Report

Date:	October 11, 2007
To:	Economic Development Committee
From:	Rita Davies, Executive Director, Toronto Culture Economic Development, Culture and Tourism
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	P:\2007\Cluster A\EDCT\ECON DEV\ed071107-038

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council endorsement of recommendations brought forward by Culture staff regarding citywide community arts development based on broad community input gathered through Community Arts Stakeholders Consultations implemented in May 2007.

This report highlights ways community input was sought to further advocate the goals and objectives outlined in the Community Arts Stakeholders Report as directed by City Council at its January 31, February 2, & 3, 2006 meeting. It also features community input gathered through the Community Arts Stakeholders Consultation process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director of Culture recommends that:

1. Council approve staff recommendations on strategies to enhance Toronto's community arts sector based on community input obtained through the Community Arts Stakeholders Consultation process. These strategies include:
 - a. Toronto Culture to develop a citywide Community Arts Action Plan in 2008, in conjunction with internal and external partners, outlining ways to enhance community arts development across the city
 - b. Toronto Culture to report to Council in a year's time regarding development and implementation of the Plan.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

These recommendations will not require additional funding in 2008. Future financial requirements arising from the development and implementation of the Community Arts Action Plan will be forwarded for consideration as new requests to the 2009 Operating Budget Process.

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

City Council on June 24, 25 and 26, 2003, approved the Culture Plan for the Creative City that outlines 63 recommendations to provide clear direction for the City's cultural agenda until 2013. On July 26, 2005, Toronto Culture presented a Culture Plan Progress Report to the Economic Development and Parks Committee. The report identified that the city had increased investment in Major Cultural Organizations and to the Toronto Arts Council per the Culture Plan recommendations. The report also identified priority actions for 2006 and 2007 including a commitment to invest in the Major Cultural Organizations, Toronto Arts Council and Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs). <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2005/agendas/committees/edp/edp051109/it004.pdf>

The Committee received the report and requested that staff consult with stakeholders outside the downtown core about their opinion on Culture budgets and the potential for increasing the budgets for their programs and that staff report back to the January meeting of the Committee.

On December 5, 2005, Toronto Culture held a focus group for community arts stakeholders outside the downtown core which included representatives from the four LASOs (Arts Etobicoke, Lakeshore Arts, Scarborough Arts Council, and UrbanArts Community Arts Council); Downsview Park Arts Alliance (DPAA) and other community arts and cultural groups. A Staff Report was presented to the Economic Development and Parks Committee outlining community-identified opportunities and challenges regarding community arts development across the city. <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/committees/edp/edp060116/it003.pdf>

At the January 31, February 1 & 2 meeting, 2006, City Council directed Economic Development Culture and Tourism staff to report back to the Economic Development and Parks Committee on opportunities to formalize a structure and that the stakeholders group be requested to further advocate the goals and objectives identified in the report. At the September 12, 2006 Economic Development and Parks Committee, Meeting 6, Clause 19 (<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/committees/edp/edp060116/it003.pdf>), Culture staff recommended Toronto Culture undertake a thorough survey of community arts stakeholders including community members from the 13 priority neighbourhoods, underserved neighbourhoods and groups, Toronto Arts Council, and youth and youth-led organizations to determine implementation of the goals and objectives previously identified and to develop recommendations for strengthening community arts across all areas of the city.

In May 2007 Toronto Culture held a series of citywide community arts stakeholder's consultations as a framework to gather ideas from community arts groups, artists and the broader community. The current report brings forward Culture staff recommendations on how to strengthen community arts across the city based on community input.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

This report responds to Council's request for Culture staff to gather community recommendations for strengthening community arts.

As identified through the Culture Plan, Toronto, as a Creative City, plays an essential role in building and sustaining a diverse urban community that is socially and economically healthy. The Culture Plan further acknowledges community arts as the bedrock of the city's cultural ecology. It recognizes the contribution of community-based arts and cultural organizations to a vibrant community arts infrastructure for the City and is an important building block for healthy and cohesive communities.

COMMENTS

Culture staff implemented a series of citywide Community Arts Stakeholders Consultation Meetings in 2007. Through these meetings broad community input was sought on ways to enhance Toronto's community arts sector based on opportunities and gaps identified at the preliminary consultation Culture staff conducted in conjunction with community arts groups and partners on December 5, 2005.

Diverse input was acquired through the Community Arts Stakeholders Consultation sessions (Appendix 6).

CONCLUSION

Developing and implementing a Toronto Community Arts Action Plan will form a customized framework to strengthen and grow the community arts sector based on Toronto's needs as indicated by broad community input.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1: Methodology

Appendix 2: Service gaps identified by focus group, December 5, 2005

Appendix 3: Communications

Appendix 4: Locations and Time

Appendix 5: Questions asked

Appendix 6: Stakeholders' input