

Budget Committee - From the Ontario Association of Art Galleries concerning proposed cuts to arts and culture funding

From: OAAG <oaag@oaag.org>
To: <buc@toronto.ca>
Date: 06/12/2011 4:11 PM
Subject: From the Ontario Association of Art Galleries concerning proposed cuts to arts and culture funding

December 6, 2011

Mike Del Grande, City Councillor, Chair, Budget Committee
 Michelle Berardinetti, City Councillor
 Frank Di Giorgio, City Councillor
 Doug Ford, City Councillor
 Chin Lee, City Councillor
 Peter Pilczyn, City Councillor
 John Parker, City Councillor

Budget Committee

Toronto City Hall
 100 Queen Street West
 10th floor, West Tower
 Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

<!--[if !supportLineBreakNewLine]--><!--[endif]-->

As faxed to (416) 392-1879

Dear Mike Del Grande and Members of the Budget Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the City of Toronto Budget as released on November 28.

The Ontario Association of Art Galleries serves and represents Ontario's public art galleries as valued and essential centres of art and learning. There are 46 City of Toronto-based OAAG members among our 113 organizational members (101 non-profit public art galleries and art organizations and 12 business organization members).

- 2 receive funding through Culture Division as major cultural organizations.
- 4 are City of Toronto arts centres, museums and galleries.

- 14 are listed as being funded through the Toronto Arts Council (as is OAAG itself).

As I am sure you have heard, and perhaps anticipated, there is a great deal of concern over the proposed 10% cut to arts funding by the City of Toronto as well as the proposed closing of City of Toronto museums.

As a result of this concern, at the request of our Toronto-based members, we organized a special information share on November 3, 2011, the first time in our association's 41-year-history that such a meeting had to be convened to my knowledge.

We are especially concerned about the cumulative impact proposed cuts will have on the operating base and public service of Toronto's public art galleries as well as the proposed closure of our member in good standing, the Market Gallery. In the case of possible closure of the Market Gallery, we are particularly concerned about the loss of Toronto-specific programming that the gallery organizes and presents.

Some of the things we heard during our meeting:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- The Toronto Arts Foundation predicts that the proposed cut to grants will lead directly to a loss of \$25 million to Toronto – this will have a significant impact on jobs, tourism and economic development.

<!--[endif]-->

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- This is because Toronto's arts organizations raise \$17.75 from other sources for every \$1 invested by Toronto.

<!--[endif]-->

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- Arts and culture create jobs. Over 8% of Toronto's workforce, 130,000 people, work in the sector – and many more depend on related businesses, including those in hospitality and tourism.

<!--[endif]-->

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- 328 arts organizations in Toronto (postal code M) produced 23,176 public activities (CADAC line 1435) for total attendance/participants of 16.4 million people

(CADAC line 1705) in financial year 2009-2010.

<!--[endif]-->

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- 35,000 Toronto residents volunteer for the arts, giving over 1 million hours of their time.

<!--[endif]-->

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- 335 arts organizations in Toronto (postal Code M) contributed \$387 million in direct expenditures to Toronto's economy in one financial year 2009-2010 (audited).

<!--[endif]-->

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- Toronto's arts organizations successfully attract over \$100 million in corporate and private support every year. City support is the bedrock on which this financial foundation is built. The city's financial investment in the arts is a critical component of the equation.

<!--[endif]-->

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- Between 1991 and 2007, creative occupations grew at more than twice the rate of the general labour force.

<!--[endif]-->

<!--[if !supportLists]-->

- Introduced by Councillor Michael Thompson (Chair of the Economic Development Committee) the Creative Capital Gains report was unanimously endorsed by City Council May 18, 2011. The report sets a target of \$25 per capita funding for arts and culture. Toronto's current funding level is \$17 per capita, well behind our international competitors: (Chicago \$26, Montreal \$32, New York \$74 and San Francisco \$87). The report concludes that culture is the fundamental driver of Toronto's future prosperity.

<!--[endif]-->

We are aware that on November 29 Councillor Gloria Lindsay Luby presented a

Friends of the Arts petition signed by over 20,000 Torontonians living in every ward of the city, requesting City Council to maintain its support of arts funding.

We hope you will reconsider making cuts to arts and culture funding at the City of Toronto, and the closing of Toronto museums.

Thank you very much for your attention to our concerns. Please don't hesitate to contact me at (416) 598-0714 if you have any questions.

Yours truly,

Demetra Christakos
Executive Director
Ontario Association of Art Galleries
111 Peter Street, Suite 617
Toronto ON M5V 2H1
Phone (416) 598-0714
Email oaag@oaag.org