

Attachment 1: Culture Connects Year One Implementation Status

This document captures the Year One actions delivered between January 2025 and April 2026 to advance Culture Connects: An Action Plan for Culture in Toronto (2025-2035). The Economic Development and Culture division worked in collaboration with City agencies, boards, commissions, and divisions to track, evaluate, and report on the status of the actions. All actions are categorized depending on their implementation status, as defined below.

Complete: Indicates that resources have been assigned and deployed, activities completed, outputs were produced, and desired short-term outcomes achieved.

In-progress: Indicates that resources have been identified and deployed, activities are underway, resulting in some outputs and short-term outcomes.

Not Started: Resources have not been identified, no activities started, no outputs or short-term outcomes.

Note: Due to the nature of ongoing and year-on-year cultural programming, activities and events implemented by EDC, many completed initiatives for 2025 are marked as in-progress in the context of the broader action.

Success Indicators identified in this Attachment were those outlined in the initial Culture Connects report. A consistent framework for measurement and reporting will be included in future reports.

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	Action	Initiative	Status	Progress and Outcomes	Success Indicator
Culture Everywhere					
1	URGENT ACTION: 1.1.1 Identify cultural space needs to secure investments and prioritize space development in underserved neighbourhoods.	Cultural Infrastructure Study	In-progress	EDC is collaborating with OCAD University and the University of Toronto’s School of Cities to complete a Cultural Infrastructure Study. An inventory of City-owned cultural infrastructure has been completed, while the entire study is expected to be completed in 2027. Baseline data of the square footage of Toronto’s cultural space and the distribution of cultural space across the city is expected.	(1) Year over year change in square footage of cultural and creative space. (2) Geographic distribution of cultural and creative space across the city.
2	1.1.2 Explore and support alternative models for space ownership and operation, such as community-led ownership and land trusts.	Blackhurst Cultural Centre	In-progress	The City is enabling the construction of the new Blackhurst Cultural Centre (BCC) by leasing land on which BCC will construct and own their new space. Construction is ongoing, expected to be completed on schedule in 2026.	Number and impact of new land trusts and other ownership models in Toronto.
3	1.1.3 Work with Indigenous communities to support self-determined cultural spaces.	Governance framework for The Spirit Garden	In-progress	Following the opening of The Spirit Garden on Nathan Phillips Square in September 2024, ongoing work continues to complete a governance framework for Council consideration.	Number and impact of self-determined cultural spaces.
4	URGENT ACTION: 1.2.1 Protect and expand existing spaces for culture to combat the displacement of creatives and industry in Toronto.	Market Gallery Design	In-progress	A study was completed to identify areas of improvement with results to be used as a key input in planning capital upgrades through existing Museum & Heritage Services Capital Assets processes.	Number of properties supported through the Creative Co-Location Facilities Property Tax Subclass.
		Artscape Properties		Artscape’s receivership process concluded with support ensuring each of Artscape’s properties was preserved for community cultural use. 400 tenancies (100%) were secured in receivership.	
		Office for Cultural Space Development and Planning Projects		Staff have reviewed development applications and proposals that, if approved, could contribute up to 120,000 square feet of cultural space in the development pipeline.	
		Creative Co-Location Facilities Property Tax Subclass		78 applications reviewed and approved for a 50% property tax reduction. 14 new venues supported through the program.	
5	URGENT ACTION: 1.2.2. Open City- and privately-owned spaces for short- and long-term cultural uses.	32 Lisgar Short-Term Use and Long-Term Tenancy as a creative and cultural hub	In-progress	6 licenses issued to community organizations for short-term cultural programming. An estimated 15,000+ attendees at 32 Lisgar programming. Significant positive media attention for providing temporary space to displaced community organization (Glad Day Lit).	Number of organizations accessing spaces through meanwhile space programs.

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		Artscape Properties		With completion of Artscape’s receivership process, ongoing work undertaken to identify and implement new models for City-owned Artscape properties and new tenancies/uses at Weston Common/Sandbox.	
		Old City Hall: The Toronto Museum		Feasibility Study to support a future staff report through CREM on the feasibility of a Toronto Museum at Old City Hall completed in February 2026 with 30 external community stakeholders engaged via Museum Advisory Committee and 415 community members engaged via online survey.	
6	1.2.3 Develop tools to protect and strengthen cultural districts across the city.	Cultural District Program	In-progress	Program framework to be presented to Economic and Community Development Committee in June 2026.	(1) Number of neighbourhoods designated as Cultural Districts. (2) Impact of community placemaking projects.
7	1.2.4 Support cultural producers leading events, festivals, and public programming through streamlined and improved processes.	Festival Strategy	In-progress	Adopted at Council in March 2026, with implementation beginning in May 2026 with identified actions serving to deliver streamlined and improved processes. Release 1 of the centralized digital permitting solution was launched in February 2026 (Special Events Permit Navigator) to support festival and event organizers in understanding what permits are required to enable their events. Release 2, which will deliver a more centralized intake process, is targeted by end of year 2026.	Number of creatives and organizations supported.
		Night Economy Strategy		Implementation continues through delivery of and improvements to the Night Economy Town Hall and ongoing updates to the Good Neighbour Guide for Late-Night Businesses, which included in 2025 important information on licensing and zoning language related to noise, harm reduction, and Wheel-Trans and micromobility, as well as a review of resident and community associations. Both tactics serve to streamline and improve processes through education, access, and increased clarity for interest holders.	
Culture For All					
8	URGENT ACTION: 2.1.1 Improve the distribution of the City’s cultural funding and other resources, with a focus on deepening support to Indigenous,	Cultural Hotspot	In-progress	Cultural Hotspot (CHS), an annual arts program celebrating Toronto’s outside-the-core communities, supported Jane Finch, Little Jamaica and Kingston Galloway/Orton Park in 2025 through the disbursement of \$357,500 in grant funding to 32 arts, culture and community organizations.	Track distribution of funding, including demographics of recipients and geographic distribution.

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	Black, and equity-deserving communities, and communities outside the downtown core.	Local Arts Service Organization (LASO)		\$2.33 million in operating funding was disbursed including a 2.5% inflationary increase and a \$379,000 enhancement that supported more equitable allocation of funds to six Local Arts Service Organizations (LASOs): Arts Etobicoke, East End Arts, Lakeshore Arts, North York Arts, Scarborough Arts and UrbanArts. Collectively, LASOs serve 21 wards and work in close partnership with residents and local agencies to meet identified community needs to deliver programs for artists, children, youth, seniors, newcomers, 2SLGBTQIA+, Indigenous, Black, racialized persons and other equity-deserving community members.	
		City Hall Live / YYZ Live / Music on the Fly		Supported 12 external music organizations to create paid performance opportunities for local artists with approximately 75% of partner organizations led by and serving equity-deserving groups.	
		Toronto Arts Council		City Council approved terms for a new five-year memorandum of understanding with Toronto Arts Council in March 2025 with a Collaboration Framework forthcoming. \$29,221,946 allocated in 2025 including a \$2 million increase to TAC budget approved by City Council as part of the 2025 Operating Budget. TAC provided targeted increases in funding to 64 equity priority organizations, including organizations led by and serving Indigenous, Black and other equity deserving communities. In addition, 27 individual artists have been funded.	
9	URGENT ACTION: 2.2.1 Enable creative, inclusive, and meaningful community-driven programming and experiences city-wide.	Cultural Centres		In addition to ongoing operations and programming, 2025 progress included establishment of several new community partners, leading to new program offerings including an Indigenous-led Inuit Soap-Carving program via a partnership with Tungasuvvingat Inuit Toronto - a not-for-profit organization. Feedback from 2025 participants and site visitors show a 98% satisfaction rate, with increased program enrollment at Cedar Ridge and the Clark Centre for the Arts.	(1) Track access and usage of cultural sites and events. (2) Collect feedback on experiences and programming to monitor relevance and impact.
		New Year's Eve	In-progress	The City's New Year's Eve program was reimagined for 2025/2026 to introduce several strategic changes that enhanced the program's artistic quality, strengthened partnerships and broadened broadcast reach, including expanded collaboration with Harbourfront Centre, centralization of the main stage and public activities at the Harbourfront Centre Concert Stage, engagement of a new livestream producer to elevate creative direction and technical execution, and a significant increase in program reach via an exclusive communications partnership led by City Comms with CP24 and supported by CBC's second year of national coast to coast broadcast coverage.	

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		City Cultural Events Volunteer Program		The City Cultural Events Volunteer program engaged 1327 volunteers during the 2025 year, providing 10,122 hours of program support. 906 of those volunteers identified as speaking more than one language, with over 25 languages spoken overall. The program recruited 559 new volunteers in 2025.	
		Public Art: New Commissions		60 total active public art commissions are being led by EDC. 2025 highlights include the installation of new artworks as part of the Glen Road Pedestrian Bridge and Rouge Valley Community Centre, and the launch of the Sculpture Garden’s public art mentorship program for emerging artists.	
		Toronto History Museums Chef-in-Residence Program		Featuring Chef Jean Régis Raynaud, the inaugural year of this program delivered 20 workshops through four public activations and 17 chef-led engagements with community members, reaching 250 participants in partnership with nine community organizations. An investment of \$55,600 supported program delivery and collaboration, with all workshops achieving 100 per cent expected participation attendance, reflecting strong demand and audience commitment.	
		Francophone Community Engagement and French Language Service Initiatives		Toronto History Museums continued expanding its commitment to French language projects and programs with seven French-language initiatives, including the bilingual "At Home in Toronto/Chez Soi à Toronto" exhibition and program, its Chef-in-Residence program featuring the work of Chef Jean Régis Raynaud, and French language tour pilot at Spadina Museum.	
10	URGENT ACTION: 2.2.2 Grow audiences through investments in marketing, promotion, and discoverability.	Festival & Events Calendar	In-progress	A revised Festival & Events calendar launched to support the discoverability of cultural events across the city for visitors and residents alike. Features added in 2025 included locations and availability of gender-neutral washrooms in event descriptions; improved accessibility criteria; and Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+, and public markets added as discrete event categories.	Track attendance rates at City-supported cultural sites and programming, with demographic information.
11	2.2.3 Expand and increase audience participation using creative technology.	Music Compass program	In-progress	The City of Toronto, in partnership with Destination Toronto, re-launched Music Compass in spring 2025. Highlighting over 100 live music venues, record stores, and listening lounges, this project ran throughout the summer and into the fall celebrating local music via sidewalk decals with QR codes. This year, the program expanded into four new neighbourhoods: Danforth Village; Downtown Toronto; St. Lawrence Market & Old Town; , The Junction, Roncesvalles & Parkdale. Music Compass continued to be a success, recording almost 50,000 page views and 33,000 website visits. In a survey distributed to participating businesses, 30% indicated that the program produced a noticeable increase in engagement, and 100% stated they would be willing to participate in the program again.	(1) Creative technology projects implemented. (2) Track attendance and engagement for virtual events, with demographic information.

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12	2.2.4 Prioritize greater access and accessibility for cultural venues, events, and programs.	Nuit Blanche Toronto	In-progress	Nuit Blanche 2025 integrated enhanced accessibility features developed in collaboration with accessibility-oriented and inclusive organizations and artists to increase inclusion. Initiatives included advanced accessibility evaluations of the program layout and visitor experience, outreach through ASL Vlogs, a dedicated accessibility webpage, ASL interpretation at the event and all discursive programming, downloadable access guides and AODA compliant maps and onsite signage accessibility symbols. A key feature on the event night was the Nuit Blanche Remote Access Hub, created in partnership with Tangled Art + Disability, which offered a first-of-its-kind hybrid event experience: part livestream, part art tour and part gathering. Throughout the event, members of the disability arts community shared their reflections and led viewers through projects across the city, providing live audio description, ASL interpretation and collective access strategies.	Track accessibility measures implemented, including community feedback on access.
13	URGENT ACTION: 2.3.1 Collaborate with Indigenous communities to amplify Indigenous-led initiatives and programming.	Indigenous Arts and Culture Fund	In-progress	\$462,739 was allocated to 29 Indigenous-led projects with 13 of 21 recipients receiving funding for the first time.	Increase number of Indigenous-led initiatives supported.
		Indigenous Food Vendor Mentorship		Partnered with Chef Christopher Britt - Chef on Treaty 13 territory - Shawnee/Potawatomi/ Descendant of Tecumseh to mentor Indigenous food providers on how to vend for festivals. Chris reached out to approximately 10 Indigenous food providers and 95% went on to be vendors at events.	
Culture for the Future					
14	URGENT ACTION: 3.1.1 Deliver improved and expanded grant and funding programs to support changing community and sector needs, and seed and scale new and growing organizations.	Festival Grants	In-progress	In 2025, the City provided a 37% increase to the Cultural Festivals Funding Program (CFFP), enabling the program to support 64 festivals, an increase of 38% in number of festivals supported. Additionally, the Special Events Stabilization initiative (SESI) was renewed from its initial one-year pilot, providing support to help address rising public safety, security, and insurance costs for 98 festivals. With regards to geographic distribution of grants, 81% of grants were allocated to festivals and events in wards outside the downtown core.	(1) Amount of funding and grants distributed, including sociodemographic information. (2) Number of organizations supported.
		Catalyst and Transformation Fund		19 Toronto-based organizations were funded through the Catalyst and Transformation Fund, delivered by Work In Culture, to plan for and implement substantive changes to their business models to improve their sustainability and encourage innovation. Fund recipients delivered projects throughout 2025, with full results expected as part of grant reports.	

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15	URGENT ACTION: 3.1.2 Identify and invest in transformative sector-wide initiatives that incubate and enable experimentation, innovation, talent development, and sustainable business models.	Film Strategy	In-progress	Toronto’s Screen Future: A Strategic Plan for Continued Growth 2025-2030 is the City’s new five-year roadmap to keep Toronto a leading, film-friendly global production hub. It outlines 13 actions across four priority areas, focusing on studio and infrastructure growth, workforce development, competitive incentives, sustainability, and client service to defend and grow Toronto’s market share while better supporting domestic production. The plan was developed through extensive industry engagement and aligns with broader City economic and cultural strategies to secure long-term investment, quality jobs, and community benefits. It has been approved by the Film, Television and Digital Media Advisory Board on September 15, 2025, and the Economic and Community Development Committee on February 24, 2026, and was adopted by City Council on March 25-27, 2026	Number of projects, events, or initiatives supported and funds invested, including sociodemographic information.
		Artsvest Toronto		In 2025, 15 organizations were accepted into the artsvest program, delivered by Business/Arts. These organizations participated in capacity-building workshops to improve their ability to secure private sponsorships. \$146,000 raised by participants in private sponsorships.	
		Film & Creative Industries Grants & Sponsorships		To support growth in Toronto’s creative industries, the City offers grants and sponsorships that make pathways to employment more accessible, expand business opportunities for creative entrepreneurs and showcase Toronto’s industries to engage residents, visitors and the world. The Film and Creative Industries section of the EDC division provided \$897,632 in funding through 65 grants in 2024 and \$1,459,493 in funding through 113 grants in 2025. This represents a 62.5% increase in funding and a 74% increase in number of grants.	
16	URGENT ACTION: 3.1.3 Strengthen relationships with all orders of government and work with City divisions to advocate for essential supports for artists and creatives, such as affordable housing and support for gig economy.		Not started		(1) Track number of artists and creatives living in Toronto, by sociodemographic information. (2) Track changes to employment in culture sector and impact of policy interventions.
17	3.1.4 Advance sustainable development and the fight against climate change through culture.	Power Drop Kiosks	In progress	Power drops at film industry hotspots demonstrate the City’s commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and are a key feature in anchoring Toronto as a green, film-friendly location, playing an active role in attracting more productions to the city. Though not a new initiative, power drop usage in 2025 was up 200% over the average use of the past 5 years. Marketing and promoting this initiative to increase awareness and uptake will continue going forward, including through a community clean up day to support one of the locations.	Track climate change cultural efforts supported.

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18	URGENT ACTION: 3.2.1 Develop and collect robust cultural research and data on the value and impact of the sector.	Culture Dashboard	In progress	Identification of data required, appropriate sources, and mechanism for presentation and communication has been undertaken to support a launch of the Culture Dashboard in 2026. This will be a key tool in tracking the health of the sector and the Key Performance Indicators outlined in Culture Connects.	(1) Gather feedback and stories on impact of cultural experiences. (2) Develop a Culture Dashboard to track progress and share data about the health of Toronto’s culture sector.
19	3.2.2 Support and collaborate with partners to advance cultural data and research objectives.	OCADU Cultural Policy Hub	In-progress	The City’s investment in the OCADU Policy Hub has supported studies and public presentations on key policy issues including a recent report on precarity in the cultural sector and a roundtable and policy recommendations for Canada’s federal AI strategy. The Policy Hub has also supported the development of key City policy projects including research support for “Culture Connects” and the development of the forthcoming Festivals Strategy.	Number of research projects and partnerships to advance cultural data.
20	3.3.1 Work with employment, newcomer services and settlement agencies to reduce barriers to employment in cultural sectors and creative industries.		Not started		Track employment outcomes with cultural sectors and creative industries, including sociodemographic information.
21	3.3.2 Propel development and growth of creatives, organizations, and sectors through training, mentorship, upskilling, knowledge sharing, and gathering.	Creative Industries Sector Development	In-progress	Increasing number of programs established and delivered across Creative Industries (Film, TV, Music, and Creative Technology) to support workforce development with many programs leveraging labour gap analyses to identify the most in-demand positions, then working with partners to provide training that leads to employment and consistently engaging historically underrepresented groups.	Track impact of training, mentorship, and knowledge sharing programming, including sociodemographic information.
22	3.3.3 Provide education, training, and mentorship opportunities for creatives and organizations to grow and develop programs, services, spaces and original Intellectual Property.	Youth Cultural Incubators Stabilization Initiative	In-progress	Provided \$615,000 of capacity-building funding to support nine emerging youth-led/serving organizations and seven established arts organizations in full year mentorships offering opportunities to gain skills and focused professional development in the areas of sustainability, governance, fundraising and grant-writing, human resources, strategic planning, evaluation and impact storytelling. As a result, mentees implemented new financial controls to better serve their organizations with many achieving increased audit readiness, CRA compliancy and adopting financial and fundraising tools such as cash-flow models to better forecast financials with three mentee organizations gaining not-for-profit status in 2025. Organizations collectively offered 15 new or expanded programs, better meeting the needs of community. YCISI organizations engaged with over 40 new community partnerships	Track impact of education and training programs, including sociodemographic information.

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				collectively, directly impacting Indigenous, Black, 2SLGBTQIA+, youth, racialized persons and equity-deserving communities.	
Culture Beyond our Borders					
23	URGENT ACTION: 4.1.1 Bring the world to Toronto and Toronto to the world through international residencies, creative exchange, and exhibition opportunities.		Not started		(1) Track Toronto artists’ career growth and opportunities locally and beyond, by sociodemographic information. (2) Track location and growth of creative and cultural businesses.
24	URGENT ACTION: 4.1.2 Foster partnerships with large-scale events to offer cultural experiences and programming to drive local, regional, and international cultural tourism.	FIFA World Cup 2026	In-progress	Funding provided through Community Celebration Support Fund (CCSF) will support local organizers in delivering vibrant, community-driven cultural projects that celebrate Toronto’s “World in a City” theme. The program saw strong demand and 64 projects were selected to receive a total of \$1.7 million, with at least one funded project in every ward to ensure geographic equity. Funded initiatives span a diverse range of activities, including festivals, parades, concerts, art installations, sports activations, public viewings, workshops, and cultural showcases. While this funding is unique and specific to the circumstances in 2026, it provides a potential model for how large-scale attracted events can be leveraged to increase investment in and profile for Toronto’s local organizations and events. Visitor economy impact will be supported through deployment of INFOTOGO mobile tourism information program to provide personalized service to visitors and residents alike.	(1) Number of large-scale events offering cultural programming and experiences. (2) Increase in percentage of visitors to Toronto for cultural experiences.
25	URGENT ACTION: 4.2.1 Increase foreign direct investment through trade missions and outreach.	xoTO Mission to London and Ireland	In-progress	In July 2025, Mayor Olivia Chow led a "Mayor’s Mission" to London and Dublin to promote Toronto's screen industry, strengthen its international production profile, and respond strategically to potential US tariffs. The mission included 30 meetings and 2 key networking events, generating 60 new industry contacts and securing relationships with leading partners including BBC, Shinawil, and Sky Studios, with a focus on co-production opportunities and attracting VFX and production work to diversify Toronto’s incoming projects and enhance its domestic creative capacity.	(1) Increase in culture sector GDP contribution and cultural employment. (2) Number and impact of trade missions. (3) Number of international creative companies establishing offices in Toronto. (4) Production volume.

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26	4.2.2 Convene national and international partnerships to advance sector development.		Not started		(1) Increase in culture sector GDP contribution and cultural employment. (2) Number of national and international cultural exchange programs.
27	URGENT ACTION: 4.3.1 Establish Toronto as a host and incubator for major international events on creativity, technology, and innovation.	TIFF: The Market Support	In-progress	Provided support for the development and launch of TIFF: The Market, coming in 2026. TIFF aims to more than double industry attendance from 5,000 to 12,000+ delegates, establishing Toronto as the second major market of the year after Cannes. This initiative will encompass features, series, and immersive content. This will create a comprehensive business hub for the global screen industries for traditional moving image content as well as emerging technologies to support innovative storytelling.	Number of creative technology events and partnerships.
28	4.3.2 Partner with industry leaders to showcase creative and emerging technologies and explore intersection and impact of AI and creativity.		Not started		Track impact of programming and partnerships.