

Measurements

We will measure the success of the Toronto Community Arts Action Plan and report on the health of the sector by the following indicators:

- a.** new community arts programs initiated;
- b.** additional accessible space opened up;
- c.** additional funding accrued to community arts groups;
- d.** festivals, events, shows or installations that resulted;
- e.** co-operative programs, training sessions and seminars initiated; and
- f.** new areas of the City that have received arts programming.



Conclusion

Cultural Services will continue to work with the Community Arts Advisory Body the public to support and enhance the broad framework of community arts across the city, build connections amongst the sector as well as identify additional opportunities for the sector to strengthen the work and outcomes of the arts in communities across the city. Cultural Services will continue to advocate and seek creative ways to support sustainable growth and development of Toronto's community arts sector.

For more information:

Community Arts Action Plan

Introduction:

Cultural Services strongly supports community arts and worked in partnership with community arts organizations, artists, and the public to develop a five-year action plan to grow and nurture Toronto's community arts sector. The focus group meetings in 2005 mapped out four major service gaps: space, funding, profile of the sector and resource-sharing among community arts organizations, artists, the broader arts community and the public.

A series of public consultations in 2007 further sought community input regarding strategies to address service gaps thus identified. In 2008, through working with an external Advisory Body, fourteen recommendations were developed and adopted by City Council at its December 1, 2, 3, 2008 meeting. Respectively, these recommendations are:

Creating more accessible space for community arts across the city

1. Parks, Forestry and Recreation and Cultural Services will review the existing permit process to explore means to streamline the process and make it more user-friendly to youth-led arts organizations and community arts organizations that deliver programs for residents in priority neighbourhoods and newcomers.

2. Cultural Services will work closely with the City Planning Division to ensure culture is included as an element of the City's planning process where possible.

3. The City will consider use of unconventional physical space for use by arts organizations and artists (i.e. benches, walls, portable-equipment arts labs) as well as other use of unconventional arts spaces (i.e. TTC, schools, vacant buildings, etc.)

4. Cultural Services will work with Toronto Artscape to continue to support opportunities for artist live/work space and work to find solutions for affordable and sustainable live/work space for artists.

Background

Community arts is the bedrock of all the arts. Cultural Services' mandate for community arts is to develop and promote opportunities for artistic expression, arts education and audience development, and to encourage access to the arts for all. Toronto's Culture Plan states, "community arts is for the people, of the people, by the people," and has true spirit to include all Torontonians in artistic opportunities to make Toronto a Creative City that is built on and "driven by people with ideas" and talents (Culture Plan 2003, p. 30). Community arts programs pull together people from all walks of life, diverse backgrounds and experiences, old timers and newcomers. They are key to promoting inclusion, social equity and healthy social change. Community arts foster future job growth in the cultural sector and creative industries. They develop audiences and strengthen individual and community resilience.

Characteristically, community arts is multidisciplinary in nature and participatory in approach. The benefits of a community arts experience include enhanced community pride, bonding among participants, skills gained in addition to the artistic process itself including those specifically-targeted at employment.

Enhancing funding for **COMMUNITY ARTS**

1. Cultural Services will work with the Toronto Arts Council and the Ontario Arts Council to encourage funding of operational costs including non-artistic expenses (i.e. technology, rental expenses, etc.) for project funding recipients to ensure the sustainability and growth of emerging community arts organizations.

2. Cultural Services will work with the City's Community Partnership Investment Program to review funding models that will assist with

equitable access to all city funding for underserved communities, including the city's 13 priority neighbourhoods, seniors and youth.

3. Cultural Services will present recommendations for City Council consideration for increasing the funding portfolio for the four Local Arts Service Organizations.

Raising the profile of the Community Arts Sector

1. Cultural Services will support the four Local Arts Service Organizations in taking a leadership role in advancing the strategies laid out in the Community Arts Action Plan to strengthen and grow community arts across the city.

2. Community arts sector will explore opportunities for setting up a branding framework that allows all community arts organizations to participate and to showcase their programs and services to the public.

3. The City will consider increasing awards for Toronto artists working in community arts programs. Cultural Services to discuss possible opportunities with the Toronto Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Council Foundation.

4. The community arts sector will consider mechanisms for effective resource-sharing (i.e. buying consortiums; collective media sponsorship; developing a collective advertising program for on-going updates of events and programs etc.).

Sharing Resources

1. Cultural Services will support and collaborate with the Toronto Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council Foundation and community partners to develop and implement strategies (i.e. neighbourhood arts hubs) that build the infrastructure of Toronto's community arts sector and facilitate effective communication and resource sharing, particularly in underserved areas across the city.

2. Cultural Services will work with youth-led and emerging community arts organizations and artists to ensure they are aware of resources available for developing entrepreneurial skills and other business related training.

3. Community arts sector will consider developing the following resource-sharing opportunities:

- a.** Exchange opportunities for executive directors of community arts organizations and also between large and small organizations.
- b.** 'Train the trainer' program (i.e. community arts organizations to mentor emerging ones).
- c.** Meeting with area BIAs and other community organizations for partnerships.
- d.** Develop promotional piece that identifies existing opportunities for all community artists and organizations to provide services to the city and to each other – particularly if neighbourhood based.

Ongoing Partnerships with Community Arts Organizations, Artists and the Public

Since the implementation of the Culture Plan in 2003, Cultural Services has been collaborating with internal and external partners to facilitate, support and develop sustainable community arts programs across the city. Highlights of such collaborative programs include:

