



The Corporation of the
Town of Cobourg

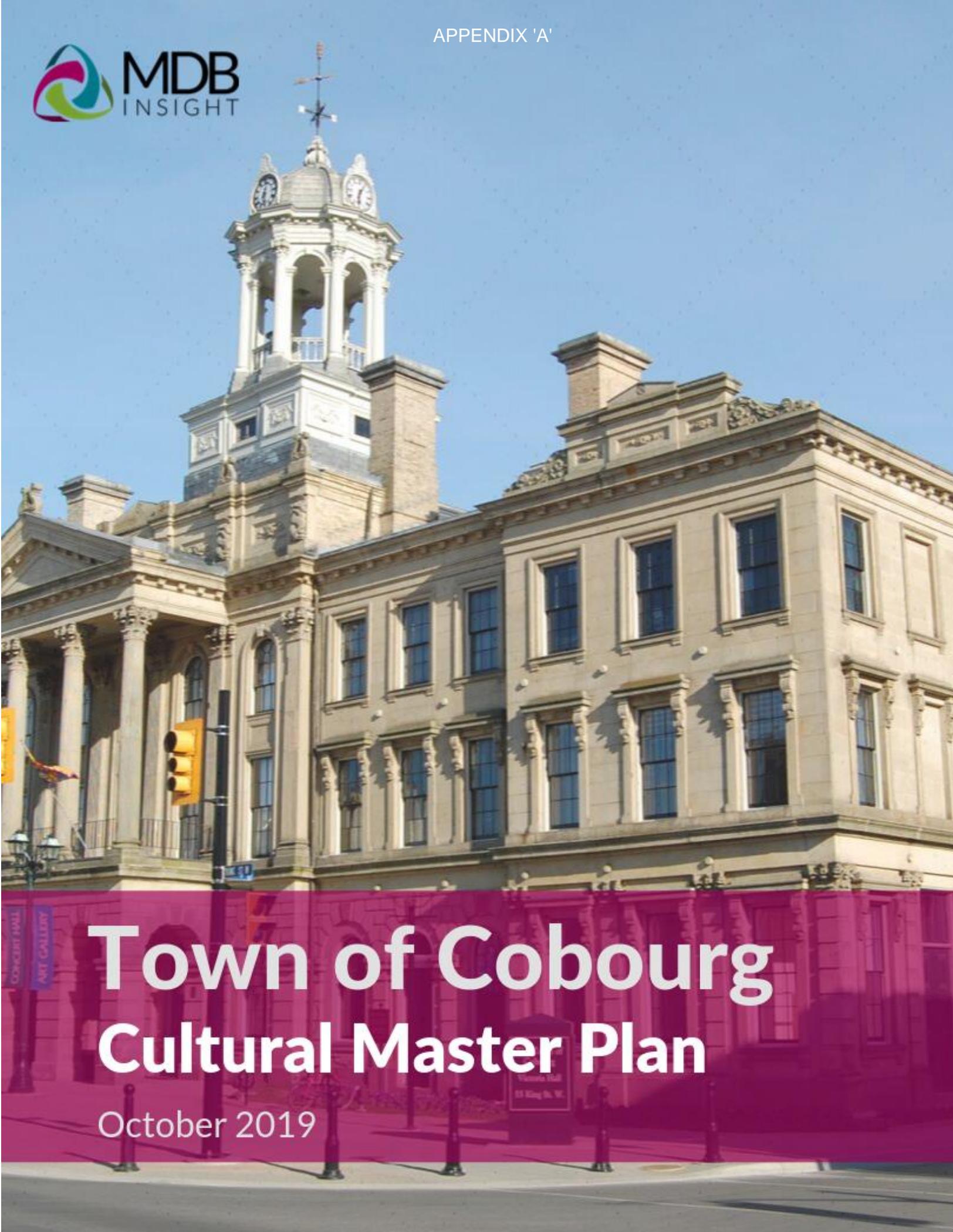
Resolution

Moved By *Coleman* Resolution No.:
Last Name Printed Bureau 423-19
Seconded By *Ben F. Darling* Council Date:
Last Name Printed DARLING October 21, 2019

WHEREAS at the Committee of the Whole Meeting on October 15, 2019, Council considered a Memo from the Director of Community Services, regarding the Town of Cobourg Draft Cultural Master Plan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council adopt the Town of Cobourg Cultural Master Plan, as provided in Appendix 'A'; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct Municipal Staff to evaluate the Cultural Master Plan for implementation and to bring forward to Council for its consideration at the appropriate time any recommendations that require new resources or funding.



Town of Cobourg Cultural Master Plan

October 2019



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Acknowledgements

Cobourg's first Cultural Master Plan has been a collaborative effort with the many residents and community stakeholders who contribute to the development of arts and culture in the town. The ideas and recommendations in the Cultural Master Plan reflect a broad range of input and interests and the Community Services Division is very appreciative of the role that members of the community played in this year-long process.

We would like to thank Mayor John Henderson, Deputy Mayor Suzanne Séguin and Councillors Aaron Burchat, Adam Bureau, Brian Darling, Emily Chorley and Nicole Beatty for their vision and commitment to supporting arts and culture in Cobourg.

In appreciation of their guidance and advice, we would like to thank Director of Community Services Dean Hustwick as well as Alyssa Bevan, Project Assistant for Recreation and Culture, and Ashley Purdy, Communications Manager for the Town.

We would also like to acknowledge the direct contributions of the Cobourg Cultural Master Plan Steering Committee. Their input has been invaluable in creating a document that is both practical and unique to the strengths and aspirations of the Town of Cobourg. A special thank you to the following members:

- Councillor Adam Bureau
- Catherine Richards, Heritage Advisory Committee
- Olinda Casimiro, Art Gallery of Northumberland
- Jack Boyagian, Northumberland Players Community Theatre
- Rick Miller, Marie Dressler Foundation/Vintage Film Festival
- Starr Olsen, Oriana Singers
- Ken Noronha, Northumberland Orchestra and Choir
- Carol McCann, Downtown Coalition Advisory Committee
- Sheila McCoy, Cobourg Art Club and Local Artist
- Astrid Hudson, Member at Large
- Gail Rayment, Member at Large

We would also like to acknowledge the involvement of the late Duane Schermerhorn. Duane embodied a true volunteer spirit, supporting several arts and cultural endeavours in the Town since his retirement in 2002.

Finally, we would like to thank the staff at MDB Insight who assisted us in shaping a vision for cultural planning that will enrich life for Cobourg's residents and delight visitors from around the world.



Defining Culture

Culture means many things to many people. In the broadest sense, culture is anything that defines the unique identity of a community or social group. Those characteristics often include social customs, seasonal traditions, geography, cuisine, oral traditions, fashion, literature, music and religious expression. However, culture also includes less obvious aspects of our lives such as heritage (both built and natural), community initiatives and the creative economy, which can include film & video industries, advertising, design & fabrication, performing arts and much more.

The categories of cultural resources have been endorsed by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as a guide for Ontario municipalities undertaking cultural asset mapping and cultural planning. The definition is based on the Province of Ontario's Cultural Resource Framework, Statistics Canada's Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics and best practice research. Referred to as a Cultural Resource Framework, it illustrates the diversity of assets that contribute to a community's cultural identity.

Community Cultural Organizations

- This resource represents community-based cultural organizations that are smaller, with often less formal organizational structures, however essential to the cultural vitality of the community.

Cultural Enterprises

- This resource represents a wide range of cultural businesses engaged in the creation and production of cultural goods or services.

Cultural Spaces and Facilities

- This resource represents facilities and spaces where cultural activities take place.

Cultural Heritage

- This resource represents significant cultural heritage sites or resources. Numerous designated heritage properties pay tribute to the Town's past.

Natural Heritage

- This resource represents significant natural areas in the Town. Assets such as trails, parks, and conservation areas offer rich recreational and community experiences for residents and visitors alike.

Festivals and Events

- This resource represents recurring cultural activities. Festivals and events contribute to the animation of public and natural spaces by bringing entertainment, new experiences, and economic impacts on the community.



Glossary of Terms

- **Accessible Culture** - The access to cultural activities for all individuals, including those that have additional needs either due to a form of disability or economic status.
- **Cultural Development** - The use of collaborative, creative and innovative problem-solving approaches and tools to leverage cultural resources in resolving planning issues and concerns of the community. The process provides the opportunity to enhance the quality of life and unique sense of place among residents.
- **Creative and Cultural Industries** - A set of industries quantified by Statistics Canada involved in the creation, production and distribution of cultural goods and services that use creativity and intellectual capital as primary inputs. They are among the fastest-growing economic sectors globally and include enterprises involved in the performing arts; film and video production; recording and broadcasting; architecture; design (graphic, industrial, interior, fashion, etc.); advertising; publishing and new and interactive digital media etc.
- **Creative Economy** - The creative economy deals with the interface between economy, culture, technology, and society. Having creativity as the main driver, the sector is concentrated around products and services bearing creative content, cultural value and market objectives. Creative goods and services are resilient products for they rely on ideas, knowledge, skills and the ability to seize new opportunities.
- **Creative Hub** - A multi-tenant centre, complex or place-based network that functions as a focal point of cultural activity and/or creative entrepreneurship and incubation.
- **Creative Minds** – Individuals who are characterized as having the ability to create from originality of thought or invention.
- **Culture** - Culture is the expression and celebration of the values and aspirations of a community or social group. This is expressed through all manner of human activities that characterise a community and its people and shape its unique sense of place. It includes the sharing of ideas; learning through expression in the fine, visual, literary, media, material and performing arts; heritage; and the shared experiences of history. To engage in cultural planning, therefore, requires knowing how people experience their local environment.
- **Cultural Council** - A strategic leadership group formed for the purposes of implementing cultural plans and ongoing cultural planning and development. Membership ideally includes Council member(s); municipal staff; wide representation from the cultural sector; the business community; important community agencies such as the United Way and Community Foundations; and post-secondary institutions.
- **Cultural Gardening** – Cultural gardening is a cultural development model that embraces the fundamental idea that cultural entrepreneurs drive creative economies.
- **Cultural Identity** - Refers to those shared beliefs and characteristics that distinguish a community or social group and which underpin a sense of belonging to that group. The ethnocultural background



is one important element, though not the sole source of identity. As cultures interact and intermix, cultural identities change and evolve.

- **Cultural Mapping** – A systematic approach to identifying, recording and classifying a community’s cultural resources.
- **Cultural Mediation** - Cultural mediation is the process of building bridges between the cultural and social realms, and the building of new relationships between the political, cultural and public spheres. It covers a broad spectrum of practices ranging from audience development activities to participatory and community arts.
- **Cultural Resources** - Cultural resources encompass both tangible and intangible cultural assets that fuel economic prosperity, quality of life and contribute to defining a community’s unique identity and sense of place.
- **Cultural Planning** - A municipal government-led process for identifying and leveraging a community’s cultural resources, strengthening the management of those resources, and integrating cultural resources across all facets of local government planning and decision-making. Cultural planning is part of an integrated, place-based approach to planning and development that considers four pillars of sustainability: economic prosperity, social equity, environmental responsibility and cultural vitality.
- **Diversity** - A state of difference in a community or social group that can include race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, and religious or political beliefs.
- **Heritage** - The Cobourg Heritage Master Plan defines heritage as assets that tell the story of the Town’s unique historical development. These include: impressive educational and civic buildings, such as the former college and Victoria Hall; fine 19th century residences of the Town’s elite; vernacular residences of the working class that built the Town and worked its industries; the late 19th and early 20th century summer houses; and the cultural landscapes of the waterfront and rail corridors that spawned the Town’s industries.
- **Place-Based Cultural Tourism** - Place-based cultural tourism is more than just attractions but also the destination’s history and heritage, its narratives and stories, its landscape, its townscape, its people. It is about discovering what makes a community distinctive, authentic, and memorable. It is about the experience of place.
- **Planning Culturally** – adopting a new mindset based on building a shared vocabulary and set of assumptions to support communication among people from widely differing professional backgrounds.
- **Quality of Place** - defined as the physical characteristics of a community, the way it is planned, designed, developed and maintained that affect the quality of life of people living and working in it and those visiting it both now and in the future.



Executive Summary

Why a Cultural Master Plan?

In developing a Cultural Master Plan, the Town of Cobourg joins leading municipalities across Ontario and Canada in recognizing the importance of cultural resources in enhancing the quality of life for residents and in building prosperous and diversified local economies. Today there are over 75 municipal cultural plans that have been completed covering over 75% of Ontario’s population.

The Town in undertaking this Cultural Master Plan intends to provide a strategic document for developing and investing in its cultural resources over the next 5 years and for leveraging these resources to advance other economic and wider community development objectives over the longer term.

The Town is already demonstrating leadership in cultural development in several ways. It established the Community Services Division (formerly called the Recreation and Culture Division) to enhance the Town's capacity to plan and coordinate cultural programming. It has leveraged local knowledge and passion for arts and culture in the creation of a Steering Committee to shepherd the creation of a Cultural Master Plan. It has also been deliberate in integrating cultural resources into a variety of its strategic planning documents thus providing a foundation for the Cultural Master Plan and bringing attention to the Town’s arts, culture and heritage resources. Chapter Two discusses these plans and their relevance to the Cultural Master Plan.

The Planning Process

The planning process for the Cultural Master Plan began in June 2018 and concluded in September 2019 with a presentation to Municipal Council. The process was supported by a Steering Committee comprised of residents, staff, community organizations and business representatives.

The Town of Cobourg Cultural Master Plan Planning Process





During the planning process, several background research documents were completed and are appended to the Cultural Master Plan. A summary of key findings from this earlier phase of research can be found in Chapters Two and Three. These documents include:

- ***Appendix A: Background Report***
- ***Appendix B: Consultation and Engagement Report***

The Town of Cobourg Cultural Master Plan

The Cultural Master Plan consists of the following elements:

- **A Vision for Culture**
- **Town Roles**
- **Strategic Directions and Action Plan**

The Cultural Master Plan is grounded in 6 Strategic Directions and provides a framework for 14 actions and 43 tactics. The framework is presented in Chapter Four.

The Cultural Master Plan Vision and Strategic Directions are presented below.

A Vision for Culture

Based on input from the community, the town of Cobourg envisions a community:

- **Where culture is diverse, inclusive and accessible to residents and visitors to the community;**
- **Where our cultural organizations help shape the quality and character of our community;**
- **Where there is an interesting and active cultural scene supported by our creative and cultural industries;**
- **Where culture is embedded in our community development decision-making;**
- **Where cultural creativity is welcomed and supported by an engaged audience;**
- **Where the quality of our cultural attractions attract visitors, promotes tourism and drives economic activity in town;**
- **Where our youth are engaged in cultural expression and experiences.**



Strategic Directions and Goals

Building on this vision of culture, the Cultural Master Plan planning process has identified six strategic directions for the Town. These have been informed by the background research, best practices in cultural planning, as well as the key themes summarized in *Appendix B: Consultation and Engagement Report*.

- **Strategic Direction #1 – Embrace and Communicate A Shared Vision of Culture Across the Town**
 - Objective: The town of Cobourg embraces a shared vision for culture that extends to a wide range of arts, culture and heritage groups, the Public Library, community groups, local businesses, and service organizations.

- **Strategic Direction #2 – Improve Communication and Collaboration Within the Cultural Sector**
 - Objective: The Town of Cobourg fosters opportunities for dialogue among cultural partners and invites residents to engage and participate in cultural activities.

- **Strategic Direction #3 – Promote Cobourg’s Rich History and Heritage**
 - Objective: The Town of Cobourg celebrates and promotes its cultural heritage resources in a way that enhances its unique identity and supports economic and tourism development goals.

- **Strategic Direction #4 – Grow Culture-Led Economic Development Programs**
 - Objective: The Town of Cobourg creates an environment that allows for the growth of cultural ideas and cultural entrepreneurs.

- **Strategic Direction #5 – Strengthen Tourism Products by Leveraging Unique Cultural Assets**
 - Objective: The Town of Cobourg recognizes and supports the growth of cultural tourism as an economic driver.

- **Strategic Direction #6 – Increase Community Engagement Among Youth and Volunteers**
 - Objective: The Town of Cobourg improves youth and volunteer involvement in arts and culture across the community through effective collaboration and partnerships.



CHAPTER ONE

Objectives and Guiding Principles of Cultural Planning

Introduction

As an economic centre in Northumberland County, Cobourg attracts creative minds from across Eastern Ontario to volunteer, participate and work in its cultural and creative institutions, operate small businesses, and build lives in the community.

Cobourg's economic success over the past decade has led to a rise in its population and growing diversity within its business community. From its early days, Cobourg has been a dynamic town, fueled by a rich history dating from early aboriginal times through 18th century settlement to the 21st century¹. This dynamism is still felt on the streets of Cobourg today as its economy which historically has been centred around industry now embraces its emerging creative economy.

As Cobourg changes, so does the diversity of its cultural expression. This is manifested in the town's entrepreneurial spirit, a belief that anything is possible, and a desire to ensure the community remains vibrant and attractive to future residents. It is a community where residents desire accessible culture, outlets for creative expression, and spaces to create and engage with each other through cultural activities.

The Cobourg of today is a place where creative individuals can work in multi-disciplinary practices, where creative businesses can thrive, and whose cultural assets draw residents and visitors to the community. The Cultural Master Plan has been informed by Cobourg residents, local businesses, cultural organizations, and creative individuals and will be used by the Town and its partner organizations as a strategic guide on how to develop and invest in the town's cultural resources to advance economic and wider community development objectives.

Objectives and Guiding Principles of Cultural Planning

At its core, cultural planning is a process for identifying and leveraging a community's cultural resources, strengthening the management of those resources, and integrating those resources across all facets of local decision making – this includes the municipal government, the business community, the not-for-profit sector, and other community organizations.

The Objective of the Cultural Master Plan

The Cultural Master Plan is intended as a framework to guide all aspects of cultural planning, with reviews of the Plan taking place every five years. The Cultural Master Plan will ensure that the application of a cultural lens to municipal decision-making is understood across various municipal

¹ Town of Cobourg Heritage Master Plan, 2016.



departments. The Cultural Master Plan will also serve to recommend changes or additions to municipal policies and guide funding decisions.

Guiding Principles

Based on community and stakeholder input, the development of the Cultural Master Plan is guided by the following principles:

- **Ensure Cobourg residents benefit from the development of the town’s cultural resources.**
- **Promote sustainable cultural development by connecting businesses, community members and the cultural community.**
- **Ensure the application of a cultural lens across various municipal departments.**
- **Support opportunities for economic growth by improving the town’s quality of place.**
- **Promote access to all artistic, cultural and heritage initiatives.**
- **Build on Cobourg’s unique identity.**

Defining Culture and Cultural Resources

Culture can be a difficult term to define. In its most comprehensive sense, culture is all those things that combine to define the unique identity of a community or social group. For purposes of municipal cultural planning, however, a broader understanding and definition of cultural resources is required.

The categories of cultural resources illustrated in the diagram below have been endorsed by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as a guide for Ontario municipalities undertaking cultural asset mapping and cultural planning. Referred to as a Cultural Resource Framework, it illustrates the diversity of assets that contribute to a community’s cultural identity.

Figure 1: Cultural Resource Framework Diagram



Source: MDB Insight



A complete description of the Cultural Resource Framework categories is provided below. The definition is based on the Province of Ontario's Cultural Resource Framework, Statistics Canada's Canadian Framework for Culture Statistics and best practice research.

Community Cultural Organizations

- This resource represents community-based cultural organizations that are smaller, with often less formal organizational structures, however essential to the cultural vitality of the community.
 - **Assets Include:** craft groups, genealogical societies, book clubs, local food groups, choirs, natural heritage groups, theatre groups, and other cultural organizations

Cultural Enterprises

- This resource represents a wide range of cultural businesses engaged in the creation and production of cultural goods or services.
 - **Assets Include:** antique dealers, artistic representatives, public art gallery, book stores, breweries, wineries, local radio stations, craft suppliers, dance studios and instruction, graphic design services, web design and production services, motion picture and video productions, libraries, history museums, musicians, music instruction and studios, photographers, newspaper publishers, and visual art studios

Cultural Spaces and Facilities

- This resource represents facilities and spaces where cultural activities take place.
 - **Assets Include:** community centres, post-secondary institutions, primary schools, secondary schools, bars with live music, restaurants with live music, performing art venues, railway sites, churches, and motion picture and video exhibition

Cultural Heritage

- This resource represents significant cultural heritage sites or resources. Numerous designated heritage properties pay tribute to the Town's past.
 - **Assets Include:** downtown and area walking tours, designated heritage properties, national historic sites, railway sites, cemeteries, monuments, plaques, art installations, and murals

Natural Heritage

- This resource represents significant natural areas in the Town. Assets such as trails, parks, and conservation areas offer rich recreational and community experiences for residents and visitors alike.
 - **Assets Include:** conservation areas, local gardens, trees, local parks, local trails, and waterways

Festivals and Events

- This resource represents recurring cultural activities. Festivals and events contribute to the animation of public and natural spaces by bringing entertainment, new experiences, and economic impacts on the community.
 - **Assets Include:** holiday celebrations, seasonal celebrations, cultural events, farmers market, film events, multicultural events, music festivals, street events, and visual arts events



CHAPTER TWO

The Cultural Planning Process and Context Review

The Cultural Planning Process

Cultural planning is an integrated and place-based approach to cultural development that puts culture at the centre of local planning and decision-making agendas. Building on the endorsement for the protection, preservation and promotion of its natural assets, heritage, arts, culture and tourism reflected in the Town’s Strategic Plan, the planning process for the Cultural Master Plan focuses on providing a strategic document that responds to community cultural aspirations while informing local decision making.

The process for developing a Cultural Master Plan has been comprehensive. It reflects and is grounded in the priorities of the Town of Cobourg Strategic Plan and incorporates the input and aspirations of residents, community organizations, businesses, and the not-for-profit community. The result is a community vision for preserving, promoting and enhancing Cobourg’s cultural resources and cultural identity and a flexible action plan that can support cultural development objectives in the short term, long-term and beyond the 5-year timeframe of the Cultural Master Plan.

The following figure illustrates Cobourg’s cultural planning process.

Figure 2: The Town of Cobourg Cultural Master Plan Planning Process





Cultural Planning Context Review

The starting point for the development of the Cobourg Cultural Master Plan was an assessment of the current environment for arts and culture. This was accomplished through a review of the policy environment within the Town of Cobourg, the collection and characterization of Cobourg's cultural resources, an analysis of Cobourg's cultural industries and cultural labour force, a comparative analysis of Cobourg's cultural industries and labour force with other similar municipalities, consideration of current municipal cultural programming and an examination of leading trends and driving forces behind cultural planning.

A more detailed understanding of the current and emerging context for cultural planning in Cobourg is provided in *Appendix A: Background Report*.

Policy Environment Review

A review of the Town of Cobourg municipal plans and policies planning documents was completed to determine current or potential connections to the Cultural Master Plan. The following plans were examined for this report:

- **Town of Cobourg Strategic Plans (2015-2018) and (2019-2022)**
- **Waterfront User Needs Assessment & Detailed Design (June 2018)**
- **Cobourg Economic Development & Tourism Strategic Plan (2015-2018)**
- **Downtown Coalition Advisory Committee Final Report (2015-2018)**
- **Downtown Cobourg Master Plan (2016)**
- **Downtown Vitalization Community Improvement Plan (CIP) (2016)**
- **Town of Cobourg Heritage Master Plan (2016)**
- **Town of Cobourg Parks Master Plan (2013)**
- **Downtown Cobourg Vitalization Residents Survey (2013)**
- **Downtown Cobourg Vitalization Business Owners Survey (2013)**
- **Town of Cobourg Official Plan (2010)**

The key takeaways for the Cultural Master Plan are presented here.

- **Downtown revitalization** has been identified in several strategic documents as a priority for the future economic success of the town. A revitalised downtown attracts both residents and tourists and helps promote local businesses and the town's arts, culture and tourism assets.
- **Heritage preservation** has been identified as an integral part of Cobourg's identity as it relates to downtown planning, neighbourhood stability, tourism development, and the town's quality of place.
- **Provide for an outdoor and active lifestyle** has been identified as a significant strategic advantage that the Town wants to improve and promote. This includes increasing the use of trails and parks, the activation of the waterfront, more recreation opportunities, and the incorporation of relevant festivals and events.
- **Cultivating partnerships and gaining community support** has been identified as a key to implementing new initiatives and growing financial resources for arts and culture in Cobourg. This includes engaging with strategic partners (regional, organizational) to introduce new initiatives, facilitating and introducing partners to one another and advocating on behalf of organizations and community members for improved funding mechanisms.



Cultural Mapping Assessment

A mapping exercise of Cobourg's cultural resources was undertaken to identify, classify and analyze Cobourg's cultural assets. This assessment provides the Cultural Master Plan with a solid baseline of data on the Town's inventory of cultural resources and key assets. It also informs an understanding of the current condition of the cultural sector and provides a benchmark against which to assess future growth and change. The assessment also provides the Cultural Master Plan with the necessary context for increasing the awareness of Cobourg's cultural resources.

With support from the Steering Committee and the community at large, the cultural mapping assessment identified approximately 424 cultural resources in Cobourg. Using the Cultural Resource Framework described in Chapter One, Cobourg's cultural resources can be characterized as follows:

- **Cultural enterprises** – 270 establishments (including not-for-profit establishments) were identified. A significant number of cultural enterprises were located in the Downtown and other major employment corridors. This confirms the importance of needed office and retail space to accommodate the growth of these enterprises.
- **Community cultural organizations** – 40 organizations were identified. A significant number of these community cultural organizations will use existing community spaces to host meetings, practices and events and be dependent on volunteers to deliver programs and services.
- **Cultural facilities and spaces** – 49 locations across Cobourg were identified as being able to host or support cultural activities. Most of these spaces are located along Cobourg's main corridors, particularly along King Street in the downtown. Given the broad appeal of the downtown, ensuring these facilities remain open to supporting cultural activities and programs will be important to the sustainability of the sector over the long term.
- **Cultural and natural heritage assets** – 49 assets were identified. Most of these assets are within heritage districts and natural pathways/corridors. These assets make a significant contribution to the quality of place for the community and reflect the Town's dynamic history.
- **Festivals and events** – 16 major festivals/events take place in Cobourg annually. These recurring activities act as anchors in the attraction and support of smaller festivals and events and contribute to the town's quality of life and visitor appeal.

Findings from the cultural mapping exercise are set out in *Appendix A: Background Report*. The cultural mapping inventory, as of the time of this report, has been provided to the Town of Cobourg. However, cultural mapping is a continuous process and requires ongoing attention and should be the beginning, not the end of cultural mapping efforts in Cobourg.

Cultural Activities and Programming

Cobourg has a diverse range of cultural activities, events, programs and facilities. These include activities and programming managed by community groups and those managed by the Town. The current cultural activities and programming in Cobourg are described below:

Community-Based

The community at large and specific community groups contribute to the cultural vibrancy of the community. Their contributions range from live theatre and entertainment programming occurring in



The Fire Hall Theatre, The Loft, and Trinity United Church to community events like the Waterfront Festival, Highland Games, Northumberland Rotary Ribfest & Music Festival, BuskerFest, Country Wild Music Festival, Summer Music Series, Concerts in the Park, Food & Music Festival, Annual Harvest Festival, Annual Shakespeare in the Park, Annual Lakeside Car Show, Annual Downtown Sidewalk Sale and Downtown Cobourg Art Walk.

Managed by the Town of Cobourg

The Town of Cobourg's new Community Services Division actively promotes arts and culture in the community through its management of facilities that provide for cultural expression and by hosting various cultural activities throughout the year. The Town also partners with various local, regional and national arts groups and organizations to promote arts and culture initiatives in Cobourg.

The Community Services Division plays a significant role in the coordination and delivery of cultural programs and activities for residents. This has included:

- Development of the Town of Cobourg Cultural Master Plan.
- Management of event applications and coordination of community events.
- Direct delivery of many important festivals and special events that help make Cobourg an events destination and the Cobourg Community Centre a cultural centre of the community.
 - First Night, Family Day, Canada Day, Sandcastle Festival, Christmas Magic
 - Sport tourism events, concerts, and hundreds of other events at the Cobourg Community Centre
- Partnering with the Northumberland Hills Studio Tour in 2019 to host an artist Gala (August 23rd) in the Grand Hall of the Cobourg Community Centre, welcoming the public to enjoy a display of work by artists from the 2019 tour. A first of its kind, the gala highlighted some of the cultural talent in Cobourg and surrounding area, promoted visitation to the area, and provided information on the Town's ongoing Cultural Master Plan process.
- Bringing authors to Cobourg for a Speakers Series in partnership with the Toronto International Festival of Authors and Lit on Tour.
- Delivery of special cultural programs
 - Canada 150 celebrations in 2017
 - Armistice18 in 2018 - seven weeks of cultural and artistic events between September 21 and November 11, 2018, commemorating local experiences and contributions to the Great War and the national experience
 - New LAV III (Light Armoured Vehicle) Monument to recognize the contributions of the Canadian Armed Forces in Afghanistan (2019)
 - Victoria Hall's 160th Birthday in 2020

Staff from other Town Divisions are also responsible for events like the Annual James Cockburn Birthday, and for heritage planning and preservation, economic development, and downtown vitalization.



The Concert Hall at Victoria Hall

The Concert Hall at Victoria Hall is a significant historical and cultural asset for the Town and functions as a primary venue for plays, concerts, musical theatre, weddings and other special events. The Hall, which opened in 1860, hosts local, national and international performers and is viewed as a cultural centre of Cobourg.

The Cobourg Box Office operated by the Community Services Division (CSD) out of the Concert Hall provides a centralized Online Ticket Ordering System for local and regional venues and organizations delivering cultural programming and events. Current venues include the Concert Hall at Victoria Hall, The Cobourg Community Centre, The Loft, Trinity United Church and The Firehall Theatre. Current User Groups include Northumberland Players, VOS Theatre, LaJeunesse Choirs, Northumberland Orchestra and Choir, Canadian Federation of University Women, Vintage Film Festival, Northumberland Film Sundays, Cramahe Township Library, Oriana Singers, The Church in Colborne, Victoria Hall Volunteers, The Loft live events, Cobourg Sports Hall of Fame and Northshore Choir.

The Community Services Division (CSD) currently delivers the following arts and cultural programming through the Concert Hall in Cobourg.

- Film presentations and Film Festivals, including the Banff Mountain Film Festival, the Paddling Film Festival, and the Vintage Film Festival
- Concert Bands including the Concert Band of Cobourg and the Festival of Big Bands
- Children’s and school programming to enhance arts and culture to youth, including the Lion King Jr and A Christmas Carol, Jack & The Beanstalk, Frozen in Time, and The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe
- Multicultural programming which has begun exposing our audiences to the rich cultures of Canada, including the Hispanic Festival and Gala and the Latin Festival
- Dance Recitals that give local dance companies and their hundreds of students a place to present dance in a professional environment, including High Pointes Dance Academy, Premier Dance, Colossal Dance and 3M Dance
- Special Events including The Cobourg Civic Awards, Speaker Series, Debates, Victoria Hall Volunteers, Cobourg and District Historical Society, Habitat for Humanity, Mayor’s Levee
- Speakers including Charlotte Gray, Jack Granatstein and Tim Cook (Armistice18 program recognizing the 100th anniversary of the Armistice of WWI – Music, Theatre, Art, Exhibitions, Speakers)
- Workshops via organizations like Greenwood Coalition dealing with local issues such as homelessness and poverty
- Holiday programming that provides all ages with an opportunity to come together for holiday-themed concerts, live theatre and internal/public special events, including the Concert Band of Cobourg, A Christmas Carol, Buddy Holly Jingle Bell Rock, Municipal Christmas Party, and A Broadway Christmas

As a rental facility, the Concert Hall also provides the opportunity for custom selected/produced programming through external production companies available to the community or for private events.



Cultural Sector and Comparative Analysis

A cultural sector analysis was conducted to characterize the cultural goods and services in the community and the contribution being made to economic growth. A comparative analysis was also completed to understand how the cultural sector in Cobourg performs relative to comparable communities and to provide evidence of investment being made by these communities. The peer communities selected with input from Town staff include Prince Edward County, Belleville, Port Hope, Port Colborne and Niagara-on-the-Lake.

A detailed cultural sector and comparative assessment are found in *Appendix A: Background Report*. Key highlights are presented here.

- In 2016, Cobourg's cultural sector accounted for 13% of the total industry employment across the Town, employing approximately 1,754 employees across 179 cultural enterprises. The majority were employed in:
 - Culinary Services (e.g. Restaurants, Live Entertainment Bars/Eateries, and Breweries) - 44% (770 employees) of the total cultural sector labour force
 - Other miscellaneous store retailers² – 7% (124 employees) of the total cultural sector labour force
 - Specialized design services – 6.8% (119 employees) of the total cultural sector labour force
 - Motion picture and video industries – 6.2% (110 employees) of the total cultural sector labour force
- The share of total industry employment in Cobourg that works in the cultural sector (13%) is slightly lower than provincial and national rates of 17% and 16%, respectively, while the proportion of cultural industries in Cobourg at 9% is similar to provincial and national rates at 10% and 9%, respectively. Over the past five years, both total employment and the number of cultural industries in Cobourg has increased.
- Most of Cobourg's cultural industries (69% of the total cultural sector) are entrepreneurs (businesses with one or no employees).
- In 2016, there were 557 cultural jobs in Cobourg. The most common cultural job in 2016 was design and video related. This includes interior designers and interior decorators, graphic designers and illustrators, producers, directors, choreographers and related occupations.
- From 2006 to 2016, cultural jobs in Cobourg grew by 46%.
- Examining the cultural sector supply chain, Cobourg has a lower proportion of cultural industries that focus on the creation of new cultural products and services when compared to the provincial average.
- Cobourg's cultural sector has similar characteristics to both Port Colborne and Port Hope but lags behind communities such as Niagara-on-the-Lake and Prince Edward County, who have 18% and 22%, respectively, of their total industry employment in the cultural sector.

² This Canadian industry comprises establishments, not classified to any other Canadian industry, primarily engaged in retailing specialized lines of merchandise. Examples include artists' supplies and auctioneering.



- Cobourg's cultural industries as a total percentage of all industries are similar to Niagara-on-the-Lake, Prince Edward County and Port Hope. This suggests that Cobourg has a diverse industry base and that the focus should be on attracting more talent to support the existing cultural sector.
- Comparing the cultural value chain to peer communities, Cobourg has a similar proportion of creation-focused industries as Prince Edward County, Belleville and Port Colborne. However, these communities have entrepreneurial programs aimed at growing the cultural sector.

Leading Trends in Arts and Cultural Development Today

An examination of leading trends in arts and cultural development was completed to position Cobourg's Cultural Master Plan within the context of best practices. A series of case studies are presented in *Appendix A: Background Report*. The relevance of these trends for Cobourg was also explored during the community consultation process. The following summary highlights the key trends considered most relevant to the growth of Cobourg's cultural sector.

The Role of Government is Shifting from that of Provider to Convener

The role of government in cultural planning is shifting from a traditional provider/delivery model to a more collaborative convener/broker model. Often, today's Cultural Plans achieve success by focusing on opportunities that improve collaboration and partnerships. This includes collaboration between local and regional levels of government; between local government and the wider public sector and its not-for-profit agencies; and between local government and businesses. The main objective of this effort has been to stretch the capabilities of municipal governments in more innovative ways and to pool talent and resources to address the social, economic and cultural needs of a community.

Cultural Planning Requires a Whole of Community Approach

The primary focus of attention of many cultural plans in the past has been on downtown or main street areas. Increasingly, however, cultural planning is taking a whole of community approach that balances the attention given to main streets and neighbourhoods with an examination of the connections and relationships between different parts of a community. One indicator of this is the emergence of a more balanced approach to the provision of arts, culture and heritage spaces and facilities. These spaces are seen less as stand-alone single-use facilities and more as part of the larger cultural fabric in the community.

Cultural Heritage Reflects the Tangible and Intangible Assets of a Community

In Canada and internationally there is a recognition of the importance of expanding the understanding of cultural heritage beyond the physical (tangible) heritage of a community (e.g. buildings, landscapes, artifacts and collections), to include the intangible heritage of stories, customs, traditions, place names, and others. Intangible heritage is seen and understood in the context of the larger idea of 'living heritage.'

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines living heritage as: *"The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, artifacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus*



providing respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.”

A community’s living heritage also serves as a source of content and inspiration for contemporary creative expression and is a powerful means of bridging the different arts and heritage communities.

Communities Are Focusing on Supporting Business and Entrepreneurial Skills of Young Creatives

Young creatives working in the cultural sector often move between different parts of the sector and between private/commercial, subsidized and not-for-profit operations. Their success is based on a flexible, contract-based work style and is reliant on having access to strong local networks. Research undertaken for the Canada Council for the Arts highlights the importance of mentoring, local networks, and a professional art and cultural community (real and virtual) for younger artists. This provides them with a platform to collaboratively grow their creative businesses and for the exchange of ideas. Research also suggests that young creatives do not have long term expectations of public sector financial support for their ambitions but rather are focused on capturing seed funding and business support at the early stage of their creative business.

Supporting the development of young creatives also involves boosting their business and entrepreneurial skills. There is a growing body of programs internationally focused on the development and delivery of tailored programs and services that support creative cultural entrepreneurship. The emergence of shared workspaces and innovation centres (e.g. Venture13) are providing a competitive advantage to creative enterprises through their access to shared resources and support in a multi-tenant environment.

The Emergence of Digital Applications is Changing the Way People Consume Cultural Activities

The rapid pace of technological convergence and the emergence of digital culture are having profound implications for all areas of cultural planning and policymaking. These trends are impacting how a creative practice might develop and how cultural content is being produced, exhibited or staged, distributed and consumed. For example, the rise of digital technology has generalized the process of buying a piece of art, which previously would have been monopolized by galleries or auction houses. Today, artists can access online global marketplaces that expand their reach to customers (e.g. Etsy).

Digital technology also has implications for cultural participation and consumption. For example, live performance acts are now accessible via online streaming services that allow people to watch without having to attend in person. Online streaming services allow for performance companies to engage a new segment of the audience who would otherwise be too far away, are not in the habit of consuming live performances or are simply unable to pay to attend.



CHAPTER THREE

Community Consultation Input

The Consultation Process

An extensive consultation process was essential to the development of the Cultural Master Plan. The Steering Committee comprised of residents, staff, community organizations and business representatives provided support and input to the consultation process. The consultation process included one-on-one interviews and small group discussions conducted in November 2018 with representation from creative and cultural businesses, non-profit organizations, elected officials and senior staff from the Town of Cobourg. This was followed by two community surveys, three topic-specific workshops with a select group of stakeholders and a community launch event. Steering committee meetings and a public open house was also conducted to gain additional stakeholder input for the refinement and adoption of the final Cultural Master Plan.

Public Engagement Activities

- **Community Launch Event** – A community launch event was held at the Cobourg Community Centre in March 2019. During the session, over 100 participants worked collaboratively to describe their vision for cultural planning in Cobourg and to share their opinions on some big ideas or strategies that would advance their shared vision. They were also asked to identify priorities for the Cultural Master Plan and the changes they would expect to see if these priorities were actioned.
- **Online Survey** – An online survey was conducted to understand the attitudes and perceptions of culture within the general public related to awareness, consumption and support for arts and culture in Cobourg. 175 members of the public provided their input through an online survey made available through the Town’s website.
- **Telephone Survey** - One of the challenges in gathering community input during the consultation and the engagement phase of a Cultural Master Plan is that it can be influenced by residents who have strong attachments and commitments to arts and culture in the community. This can lead to skewed outcomes as individuals and groups advance their select views and opinions. Recognizing the need to ensure resident input to the awareness, consumption and support for arts and culture in Cobourg, a random telephone survey was administered by a professional market research team in addition to the online survey. The survey team contacted 150 randomly selected members of the public of various ages. Survey input was collected via computer-aided technology and made available in any language the participant requested. Both cell phones and landlines were used to generate a random participant list.
 - Both surveys were analyzed independently to identify any differences or similarities between interested public opinion (those who elected to complete the online survey) and general public opinion (those who were selected randomly to complete the telephone survey). *Appendix B: Consultation and Engagement Report* provides the results of both surveys. The results are reflected later in this section.



- **Public Open House** - A public Open House was conducted in September 2019 after the creation of the Draft Cultural Master Plan. The meeting served to gain input from residents, community organizations and business representatives on the draft Plan before going forward for final adoption.

Stakeholder Engagement Activities

- **Stakeholder Interviews** – 25 interviews with a cross-section of stakeholders was completed to bring different backgrounds and perspectives to the Cultural Master Plan. Stakeholders were asked their opinions on the potential impact that a Cultural Plan may have in strengthening the sector and its contributions to the social and economic vitality of the Town.
- **Topic Driven Focus Group Discussions** – Three focus groups were conducted with a select group of community stakeholders. These groups discussed culture and creativity as a driver of economic development, culture through existing programming and events, and culture led tourism development.
- **Cross-Departmental Workshop** – A cross-departmental workshop was conducted with staff from various divisions within the Town of Cobourg. The workshop introduced participants to the cultural planning process, explored potential cultural development opportunities, considered the role of the town in making this happen and how to embed the concept of culture in the planning of the Town.

The discussion that follows provides important insight into the development of the Cultural Master Plan. It highlights the strengths, opportunities, and aspirations that were identified by Cobourg's cultural sector and the broader community. A more detailed discussion is provided in *Appendix B: Consultation and Engagement Report* appended to the Cultural Master Plan.

Key Findings from The Public Engagement Activities

Launch Event Findings

- Working in small groups, participants were asked to write a short phrase that describes a culturally rich Cobourg. The following summarizes this input:
 - A culturally rich Cobourg is diverse, inclusive and accessible to all members of the community.
 - A culturally rich Cobourg provides arts and cultural activities in a coordinated and well-communicated way.
 - A culturally rich Cobourg is a place where creativity is encouraged and supported.
 - A culturally rich Cobourg motivates youth to participate in arts and culture.
 - A culturally rich Cobourg has a strong cultural tourism product.
- Attendees were also asked to identify big ideas or strategies needed to advance the collective vision. The following summarizes this input:
 - Creation of a centralized communication hub for the cultural activity taking place in Cobourg.
 - Use culture as a tool to connect waterfront and downtown activities.
 - Enable street-level activities to increase awareness and exposure of existing cultural assets (e.g. Library, AGN, Museums).
 - Better promotion of the Town's cultural stories.



- Market entrepreneurial support programs to creatives in Town, especially youth.
- Expand the town's cultural mapping efforts and showcase the diverse range of arts and culture products and offerings that appeals to residents and visitors.
- Maintain a cultural leadership team that can assist the municipality in implementing the Cultural Master Plan.
- Provide designated spaces for creative and cultural initiatives.
- Align the Cultural Master Plan with tourism and economic development objectives and outcomes.

Survey Findings

- Approximately 95% of respondents from both surveys said arts and culture are important, and approximately 45% of respondents suggested they regularly participate in cultural activities. 66% of respondents indicated that most of the participation in arts and culture takes place in Cobourg, with the remaining 34% travelling outside Cobourg to participate in cultural activities. Common destinations included Port Hope and Toronto.
- The majority of survey participants identified live musical performances, festivals/events and public art galleries as their preferred arts and culture-based activities.
- When asked about reasons or barriers affecting participation in arts and culture, 52% of respondents indicated their main reason for not attending an arts and culture activity was the lack of information/promotion of activities. The remaining respondents indicated time constraints as a primary reason (36%) and lack of interest in the programs available (32%).
- Open-ended comments provided by respondents suggested the lack of coordination in programming as a barrier. Specific examples included having multiple events taking place at the same time, forcing respondents to choose one event over another. While this may also indicate the depth of cultural programming in the community, respondents raised this as a concern in terms of engaging a greater number of people in Cobourg.
- In terms of the desired programming, respondents suggested a focus on growing film and music-related events, additional live theatre capacity, and improved gallery and art appreciation spaces. Additionally, respondents were also seeking diversity in programming all year round, including a summer and winter arts program, annual heritage events, and more public art.
- When asked about the Town's role in supporting arts, culture and heritage considerations, most respondents suggested that:
 - They were very satisfied with how the Town is currently financially supporting arts, culture, and heritage (over 85% agreed between both surveys).
 - They were mostly satisfied with the level of promotion for arts and culture across Cobourg (over 75% agreed between both surveys).
 - They were divided between satisfied and not satisfied with the number of facilities and spaces to participate in arts, culture, and heritage in Cobourg (over 50% agreed between both surveys).
- When respondents were asked about their interest in opportunities to volunteer or get involved in Cobourg's arts and culture scene, 52% of respondents suggested they were interested. Open-ended comments suggested leveraging social media, email and community bulletin boards in the libraries and other town-run facilities, to highlight volunteer opportunities in Cobourg.



- In response to asking what respondents would consider a culturally rich community to be, aggregated comments from survey respondents identified three themes to inform a vision for culture for the Town of Cobourg.
 - A culturally rich community uses culture to help strengthen the sense of community.
 - A culturally rich community uses culture to enrich and enhance the quality of life for residents.
 - A culturally rich community uses culture to attract visitors and promote tourism, to drive economic activity in town.

Key Findings from The Stakeholder Engagement Activities

- Focus group participants suggested they would like to see an improved dialogue between cultural organizations and the business community in order to address the needs of local business (e.g. joint marketing efforts to promote events and activities alongside local businesses) and the improvements to the delivery of cultural programming and activities (e.g. the creation of an online calendar). The focus group participants identified the Town as a facilitator of cross-cultural dialogue and promoter of local success stories.
- Focus group and interview participants both suggested that Cobourg needs to do a better job of acknowledging/promoting its home-grown talent in a way that raises the profile of the town and helps define the community's identity as it relates to arts and culture.
- Focus group and interview participants suggested that many local organizations are finding it difficult to sustain operations across the Town (e.g. volunteer fatigue, communication challenges, succession planning).
- Focus group and interview participants also suggested that the Town's policies (e.g. bylaws, zoning, and permitting process) can limit cultural activities and cultural expression. The Signage Bylaw was given as an example. Participants suggested that the Town needs to build flexibility into their policy environment to allow for any kind of cultural activity.
- Participants that attended the cultural industries focus group suggested a need to enhance the amount of creative space available across the town. It was suggested that the Town along with realtors should investigate its heritage stock of buildings and through adaptive reuse policies and incentives turn this stock into available temporary or full-time creative space.
- Focus group and interview participants also commented on the strength of Cobourg's cultural talent. However, participants noted that the availability of business support services for creative individuals was not well communicated, particularly for creative individuals who are looking to transfer their talents into for-profit business opportunities. The Downtown Business Association, Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Enterprise Centre were noted as potential partners for this support.
- The cross-departmental meeting identified the need to adopt guiding principles for cultural development across the Town administration. Staff noted that the Cultural Master Plan should identify how the Town can embed culture across decision-making and inform administrative policies and procedures. The cross-departmental meeting also suggested that the successful implementation of the Cultural Master Plan will require strong interest from partners and a clear role in how these partners can support the rollout of the recommendations in the Plan.



SOAR Results

The Cultural Master Plan is informed by a Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results (SOAR) assessment. The assessment outlines competitive conditions that affect the economic and broader community development potential of the Town of Cobourg background research, stakeholder input and an extensive document review. The power of a SOAR is that it summarizes conditions unique to Cobourg and informs the strategies and actions required of the Town to sustain, support, and develop its cultural sector.

The consulting team used the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach in developing the SOAR for the Cultural Master Plan. Appreciative inquiry focuses on effectively utilizing stakeholder participation and building on what works best, to ensure continued success. In developing the SOAR, the consulting team, under the direction of the project lead, distilled key findings and drew associations from the various sources of community input and statistical research. Keyword searches were used to achieve this. A series of common themes and insights emerged. This included key achievements, strengths, assets, opportunities and positive aspects of arts and culture programs and services in Cobourg. In addition, key aspirations and meaningful measures to indicate success was determined. These results were then grouped under appropriate sections of the SOAR framework.

A SOAR is characterized by the following terms.

S	Strengths What can we build on?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are we doing well? ▪ What key achievements are we most proud of? ▪ What positive aspects of arts & culture programs and services have individuals and organizations commented on?
O	Opportunities What are our best possible future opportunities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What changes in demand do we expect to see over the next years? ▪ What external forces or trends may positively impact arts & culture development? ▪ What are the key areas of untapped potential?
A	Aspirations What do we care deeply about?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are we deeply passionate about in the arts and culture? ▪ As a Town, what difference do we hope to make (e.g. to residents, for institutions, to cultural organizations)? ▪ What does our preferred future look like?
R	Results How will we know we are succeeding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What meaningful measures will indicate that we are on track in achieving our goals? ▪ What resources are needed to implement our most vital projects and initiatives? ▪ What are the key goals we would like to accomplish to achieve these results?



Figure 3: SOAR Assessment

Strengths

- Range and depth of local cultural resources and amenities
- Natural landscape and built community heritage
- Strong volunteer networks
- Supportive business community
- Supportive municipal leadership
- Caliber of local talent
- Strong economic development and tourism brand
- Proximity to population centres and major transportation links
- Strong network of community cultural organization

Opportunities

- Strengthen coordination and collaboration between Town and stakeholders
- Increase community awareness, marketing & promotion
- Grow tourism by leveraging cultural assets
- Support performing and visual arts development
- Optimize and leverage recreational assets
- Support for the coordination of volunteer networks
- Centralize communications between cultural groups and update promotional materials
- Improve the Town's website to showcase cultural assets and local success stories
- Maximize current cultural spaces
- Encourage youth participation with ongoing cultural activities
- Embed protocols and policies to support culture development

Aspirations

- A community rich with cultural programming, festivals and events
- A cultural tourist destination and a gateway for Eastern Ontario heritage
- A diverse cultural legacy that future generations can embrace along with a strong sense of identity and pride
- Arts and culture assets are well-linked to nature/water assets
- A creative hub, with strong art education and appreciation, talent recognition, family-friendly, accessible, dedicated organizations to support and nurture creatives

Results

- Well-connected cultural sector
- Access to opportunities
- Animated public spaces
- Cultural awareness
- Year round programming
- Culture is part of the everyday
- Strong appreciation for the value culture brings



Defining the Town's Role

It is important to recognize that the Town should not be the only player contributing to cultural planning in Cobourg. For this Cultural Master Plan to be successful, it is essential that the implementation of the Plan be seen as a shared responsibility between the Town and various community partners. With this in mind, the Town has two primary roles in administering the Cultural Master Plan: to seek partnerships to advance cultural planning and to promote fiscal responsibility when it comes to funding and investing in cultural planning.

Partnerships

The successful implementation of the Cultural Master Plan will require the involvement of additional culture sector partners such as educational institutions, businesses, tourism industry partners and other levels of government. Creative individuals, arts, heritage and cultural administrators, volunteers, audiences, associations and businesses will all need to embrace their roles - not just in driving cultural vitality but in connecting to and supporting the larger community's needs and aspirations.

In this light, the Town of Cobourg's role and responsibilities in support of cultural planning and partnerships should be:

- **Establishing partners** - establishing and sustaining relationships with educational institutions, the business community, tourism industry partners, other levels of government, and cultural sector organizations;
- **Facilitator and convenor** – building connections and strengthening collaboration between cultural sector partners and community and business partners; and
- **Promoter and champion** – acting as an advocate for cultural development within the Town and beyond, by recognizing cultural partners and selecting local cultural sector partners to strengthen festivals, events and cultural experiences.

Fiscal Responsibility

Similarly, the Town of Cobourg also plays a role in enabling new and improved cultural investment across the town. The Town's role and responsibility in financially supporting cultural development should continue to be:

- **Funder³** – continuing to fund cultural development programs and activities; and
- **Advocate** – advocate alongside cultural community groups for additional provincial and federal grant opportunities.

³ The Cultural Master Plan does not analyze the Town's current level of financial support for arts and culture in Cobourg. Implementation of the Cultural Master Plan should include consideration of Town's direct financial support and in-kind support for arts and culture in the community. This will inform the optimal level of municipal funding, desired return on investment and any additional resources that may be required to support the cultural sector in Cobourg.



Strategic Directions and the Action Plan

In achieving the vision for culture, the Cultural Master Plan process has identified six strategic directions. The following strategic directions are informed from the results of the background review and the community consultation process and reflect the themes that were identified in *Appendix B: Consultation and Engagement Report*.

- **Strategic Direction #1** – Embrace and Communicate A Shared Vision of Culture Across the Town
- **Strategic Direction #2** – Improve Communication and Collaboration Within the Cultural Sector
- **Strategic Direction #3** – Promote Cobourg’s Rich History and Heritage
- **Strategic Direction #4** – Grow Culture-Led Economic Development Programs
- **Strategic Direction #5** – Strengthen Tourism Products by Leveraging Unique Cultural Assets
- **Strategic Direction #6** – Increase Community Engagement Among Youth and Volunteers

Interpreting the Action Plan

Each strategic direction is supported by a series of objectives and a list of actions or recommendations. Priority has been assigned for each action, based on criteria that include:

- The level of immediacy based on the Town’s objectives
- The potential to contribute to the overall cultural vibrancy and identity of Cobourg
- The resources required
- The logical sequence of actions, with each building from the last; in some cases, these are identified as separate steps to support the same overall objective

The priority assigned to each action item also corresponds to a specific timeframe. The time frame for each priority level may be operationalized as:

- **Short term** – within 2 years
- **Medium term** – 3-5 years
- **Long term** – 5 years and beyond



Action Plan

Strategic Direction #1 – Embrace and Communicate A Shared Vision of Culture Across the Town

OBJECTIVE: The Town of Cobourg embraces a shared vision for culture that extends to a wide range of arts, culture and heritage groups, the Public Library, community groups, local businesses, and service organizations.

#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
1.1 - Raise awareness of the Cultural Master Plan across all departments				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an internal communications strategy for the Cultural Master Plan. 	Community Services Division (CSD) & Communications		Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise Council reporting forms to include culture as an element of decision-making. 	Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)		Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Municipal Cultural Team comprised of Town of Cobourg staff that meet bi-annually to share information and build understanding related to cultural development and planning. 	CSD		Staff Time
1.2 - Explore sources to support the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a Cultural Advisory Committee of Council to advocate and support the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan. Include representation from business, education, the cultural sector and economic development. 	CSD; CAO	TBD	Staff Time



#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage creative individuals and cultural businesses and organizations to participate on advisory committees and local boards to inform decision-making. The following advisory committees and local boards should have representation; Parks and Recreation; Planning and Development; Cobourg Heritage; Sustainability and Climate Change; and Cobourg Public Library Board. 	CAO	TBD	Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect and dialogue with Provincial representatives to determine and exploit Provincial assistance for cultural programming. Current eligible programs for Cobourg and Cobourg’s cultural organizations include Celebrate Ontario, Community Museum Operating and Pay Equity Grants, Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, Ontario Libraries Capacity Fund, and the Tourism Development Fund. 	CSD; Economic Development (ED)	Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MTCS)	Staff Time
1.3 – Report on a consistent set of performance metrics				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a strategic planning session⁴ with CSD staff, cultural sector organizations and regional representatives from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to determine a set of performance indicators that are specifically designed for Cobourg (based on data collection capabilities). Some indicators may require cultural sector organizations to track and provide data to the Town (e.g. the number of tickets sold at the Concert Hall at Victoria Hall). 	Cultural Advisory Committee of Council (CACC)	MTCS; Cultural Sector Organizations	Staff Time; Planning Session is Available From the MTCS

⁴ The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport provides a generic set of performance indicators that measure progress towards cultural development objectives. This planning session will help refine those performance indicators with Cobourg’s staff and cultural organizations to determine the best set of performance metrics based on readily available data.



#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an ongoing Cultural Report Card based on selected performance metrics. Share results annually with community partners and the public. 	CSD; CACC		Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene an Annual Cultural Summit to communicate achievements in implementing the Cultural Master Plan and to seek community input in identifying new and emerging issues. 	CSD; CACC	TBD	\$5,000 - \$10,000
1.4 – Invest in cultural facilities as anchors for cultural development in Cobourg				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate cultural infrastructure to understand the current level of space utilization and resources to determine the need for more space to support and showcase art, culture and heritage offerings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the establishment or expansion of existing community space for cultural activities (including the expansion of library activities). Consider the potential for Victoria Hall and the Cobourg Community Centre to host additional cultural activities. 	CSD	Public Library; Cultural Organizations	Requires capital funding
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a feasibility assessment for building, operating and maintaining a Town-operated multi-purpose cultural facility, which includes performance and rehearsal space. 	CSD	ED	\$30,000 - \$35,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the possibility of positioning Victoria Hall as a working museum that provides visitors with a unique interactive opportunity to experience Cobourg’s history. 	CSD	Art Gallery of Northumberland; Victoria Hall Volunteers	Staff Time; Operating Space; cost associated with planning and programming



Strategic Direction #2 – Improve Communication and Collaboration Within the Cultural Sector

OBJECTIVE: The Town of Cobourg will create opportunities for dialogue among cultural partners and invite residents to engage and participate in cultural activities.

#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
2.1 – Build sector capacity through partnerships and mentorship				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to create a mentorship and coaching program⁵ that encourages established cultural organizations (such as the Art Gallery of Northumberland, Northumberland Players; Victorian Operetta Society; Oriana Singers) to assist in developing emerging cultural organizations in Cobourg. 	CSD; CACC	Established Cultural Organizations	Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to add social media and online forums to the Experience Cobourg website to support networking and exchange of ideas. Forums should include professional development opportunities for younger artists or cultural organizations to engage with more established practitioners and organizations. 	CSD		\$10,000 – \$15,000

⁵ Artscape Canada’s mentorship and coaching program is an example of a potential program. The program relies on participants working closely with established cultural organizations to develop their capacity across a range of areas including organizational development, project planning, fundraising strategies, property management, operational development, and community engagement practices, etc. The program is facilitated by Artscape Canada who brings the two parties together.



#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene a biannual meeting for cultural organizations and industries to examine opportunities to increase collaboration among the two groups. Opportunities should be examined on two levels: on an operational level (e.g. shared collection storage, volunteer recruitment and management, joint marketing); and on a programming level (e.g. shared programs, potential joint funding applications). 	CSD; ED & Communications	Cultural Organizations; Cultural Industries	Staff Time
2.2 - Explore and foster collaborative opportunities for cultural development				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage the new calendar of events on the Experience Cobourg website to showcase cultural offerings and activities and integrate them with tourism-related events and festivals. 	CSD	Cultural Organizations; Tourism Operators	\$2,500 - \$5,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore collaboration opportunities with neighbouring communities of Port Hope and Northumberland County in the development of regional cultural initiatives. An example might include a rotating or touring gallery exhibit across each community's museums and galleries, a Northumberland Heritage Map, or a regional cultural grant. 	CSD	Municipality of Port Hope, Northumberland County	Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the creation of a coordinating body outside of the Town administration to support improved communication efforts, the creation of a calendar of events, and to foster initiatives between cultural organizations and creative individuals. 	CSD; CACC & Communications	Cultural Organizations	Staff Time; External Support



Strategic Direction #3 – Promote Cobourg’s Rich History and Heritage

OBJECTIVE: The Town of Cobourg celebrates and promotes its cultural heritage resources to enhance its unique identity and support economic and tourism development goals.

#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
3.1 – Promote cultural heritage resource conservation				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate cultural heritage resource conservation into municipal decision making and policy documents. 	CAO	Planning Department; Cobourg Heritage Advisory Committee	Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with heritage stakeholders to create a Cobourg heritage story map⁶ that will improve education and awareness regarding cultural heritage resources and the collection of community stories. These stories can be added to the Experience Cobourg website. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the creation of a Jane’s Walk weekend as a way to engage residents in local storytelling 	CSD; Planning Department	Cobourg Heritage Advisory Committee	Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in a strategic planning session with the Alderville First Nation to explore how the history and culture of their communities could be respectively profiled as an element of Cobourg’s heritage tourism product. Topics for the strategic planning session could include introducing Aboriginal events such as a local Pow Wow, how best to highlight their community stories, and what tourism opportunities could be partnered or further strengthen. 	CSD	Alderville First Nation; Cobourg Heritage Advisory Committee	Staff Time

⁶ The City of Kawartha Lakes has created an “Our Heritage Stories Map” that profiles the community’s intangible cultural heritage stories. These stories are marked with a physical identification on a map to indicate to a visitor where that story took place.



#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the recommendations emerging from the Heritage Master Plan, in particular, those recommendations that impact heritage tourism, heritage landscapes, and heritage storytelling (intangible history). Examples of recommendations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That the Town of Cobourg considers branding and marketing initiatives aimed at celebrating the small-town character of Cobourg. ▪ That the Town of Cobourg considers the reuse of older buildings (especially near downtown) when seeking additional office and institutional space. ▪ That the Town of Cobourg implements enhanced signage and wayfinding initiatives in the downtown area including interpretative signage celebrating Cobourg’s history. ▪ That the Town of Cobourg includes a review of broader landscape features such as neighbourhoods, farms, schools and parks in order to identify potential cultural heritage landscapes and put in place appropriate protection measures. 	CSD; CAO & Planning Department	Cobourg Heritage Advisory Committee; CSD	Staff Time



Strategic Direction #4 – Grow Culture-Led Economic Development Programs

OBJECTIVE: The Town of Cobourg will collaborate with its partners to build an environment that allows for the growth of cultural ideas and cultural entrepreneurs.

#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
4.1 – Support the cultural sector with funding, grant and training opportunities				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct an evaluation of the Town of Cobourg’s cultural grant program to determine the effectiveness of the current program and to identify opportunities to better meet the needs of the community, streamline the administration of the program and to include updated parameters (e.g. additional points for youth involvement). <p>The evaluation should include interviews with staff members involved in the delivery and management of the grant, a telephone survey of representatives of Cobourg’s cultural organizations and workshop sessions with cultural sector representatives to provide future direction of the grant programs based on the priorities identified in the Cultural Master Plan.⁷</p>	CSD; ED	Cultural Organizations	\$25,000 - \$30,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Northumberland Economic Development and Northumberland Community Futures Development Corporation to revise existing grant programs to provide local creative individuals (e.g. artists, designers) with low-interest loans towards the establishment of their start-up businesses. 	ED	Northumberland Economic Development; Northumberland CFDC	\$10,000 - \$15,000

⁷ The City of Vancouver conducts a Cultural Grant Program evaluation every four years. The process they have undertaken has been used as a best practice for several communities across Canada.



#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with cultural organizations to develop a series of business development skills workshops for the cultural sector. 	ED	Cultural Organizations	Staff Time; Operating Space
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue monitoring cultural funding programs and opportunities. 	CSD	ED	Staff Time
4.2 – Implement an attraction strategy for people, business and investment in Cobourg				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add targeted information about Cobourg’s cultural resources to existing tourism marketing materials (e.g. Experience Cobourg). Ensure that the messaging showcases the importance of Cobourg’s assets as drivers of creativity and innovation in arts and culture and the benefits these assets bring to the broader business community. 	CSD	CACC; ED	\$5,000 - \$10,000
4.3 – Advocate for the creation of spaces for cultural industries and organizations across the Town				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the potential of expanding the existing Downtown CIP to incent the use of existing vacant buildings and/or storefronts as temporary or pop-up space for artists and cultural groups. 	ED; Planning Department	CACC; Property owners	Staff Time; Potential Feasibility Studies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate and support the creation of art-led makerspaces⁸ throughout Town facilities (e.g. in community/recreation centres, libraries, innovation centre; schools). 	ED; CACC	Property owners; Northumberland Makers	Staff Time

⁸ A makerspace is a collaborative workspace inside a school, library or separate public/private facility that provides hands on learning, help with critical thinking skills and boosts self-confidence. Makerspaces are also fostering entrepreneurship and are being used as incubators and accelerators for business startups. The Northumberland Makers in Cobourg is an example of a local makerspace that prepares individuals with skills in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math.



Strategic Direction #5 – Strengthen Tourism Products by Leveraging Unique Cultural Assets

OBJECTIVE: The Town of Cobourg recognizes and supports the growth of cultural tourism as an economic driver.

#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
5.1 – Develop and implement an action plan to attract cultural tourism investments				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a resident attraction marketing campaign⁹ that showcases Cobourg’s cultural tourism offerings with the goal of attracting residents. 	CSD; ED		\$10,000 - \$20,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the growth of cultural tourism by providing cultural tourism content for Regional Tourism Organization 8 wayfinding, promotion and programming strategies. 	CSD	Regional Tourism Organization 8 (RTO8)	Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch a community storytelling initiative to support the development of cultural marketing content and provide stronger interpretive signage for local assets. The storytelling initiative could leverage a combination of new and existing channels including the Experience Cobourg website to invite the community to contribute; adding a storytelling component to one or more existing festivals or events or convening an annual storytelling festival. 	CSD		\$10,000 - \$20,000

⁹ The Hasting County’s I Left the City campaign (<https://ileftthecity.ca/>) provides a great example of a residential marketing campaign. The marketing campaign illustrates Hasting County’s successful community stories, cultural tourism amenities, and business support activities.



#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct a review of Cobourg’s public art policy to allow for temporary cultural installations/exhibitions and programming across public spaces, particularly in high pedestrian areas such as the Downtown and Waterfront areas and Community Centres. Exemplar public art policies that encourage temporary installations include Burlington, ON, Calgary, AB and Richmond, BC. 	CAO; CSD	CACC	Requires capital funding
5.2 – Strengthen the delivery of festivals and events programming				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a festival and events strategy that serves as a policy framework to guide municipal decision-making and is aligned with the Town’s Strategic Plan and Cultural Master Plan. The key deliverables of the strategy should be to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and assess the impact of current festivals and events delivered by the Town directly and the events that the Town supports that are delivered by local community groups. ▪ Review current human and financial resources assigned to the implementation of festivals and events. ▪ Benchmark the Town’s current delivery of festivals and events against those of similar-sized municipalities and the provision of best practice examples. ▪ Assessment of event hosting locations and facilities. 	CSD	Festivals and event providers	\$35,000 - \$40,000



Strategic Direction #6 – Increase Community Engagement Among Youth and Volunteers

OBJECTIVE: The Town of Cobourg will collaborate with community partners to improve youth¹⁰ and volunteer involvement across the community.

#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
6.1 – Foster opportunities for cultural expression and experiences for Cobourg’s youth				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with local and regional youth organizations (e.g. Northumberland 4-H), to support a mentoring system that provides opportunities for the youth of Cobourg to participate in cultural development. Explore opportunity to host a Cultural Career Day to showcase career options and opportunities in arts and culture 	CSD	Cultural Organizations; Youth Organizations	Staff Time; \$10,000 - \$20,000
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the involvement of youth ambassadors on boards for festivals and cultural events, so they are involved in the planning and decision-making of events 	CACC	Cultural Organizations	Staff Time
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with Venture 13, host an annual youth summit that showcases the Town’s arts and culture assets and programming and encourages experiential and culturally-based learning outside the classroom. 	CSD; Venture 13	Local Schools	\$10,000 - \$15,000
6.2 – Engage and support culturally related volunteerism				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Town Volunteer Management Strategy. 	CSD	Cultural Organizations	\$15,000 - \$20,000

¹⁰ For the purposes of the Town of Cobourg Cultural Master Plan, youth is represented by individuals 25 years and under as defined through stakeholder consultation.



#	Action / Tasks	Lead	Suggested Partners	Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Promote volunteer opportunities to new residents to integrate themselves and feel a sense of belonging in their new community.	Mayor's Office; CSD	Cultural Organizations	Staff Time



Town of Cobourg Cultural Master Plan’s Action Plan Schedule

Action	Short Term (Within 2 Years)	Short Term (3-5 Years)	Long Term (5+ Years)
1.1 – Raise awareness of the Cultural Master Plan across all departments			
1.2 – Explore sources to support the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan			
1.3 – Report on a consistent set of performance metrics			
2.1 – Build sector capacity through partnerships and mentorship			
4.1 – Support the cultural sector with funding, grant and training opportunities			
2.2 – Explore and foster collaborative opportunities for cultural development			
3.1 – Promote cultural heritage resource conservation			
5.1 – Develop and implement an action plan to attract cultural tourism investments			
6.1 – Foster opportunities for cultural expression and experiences for Cobourg’s youth			
4.2 – Implement an attraction strategy for people, business and investment in Cobourg			
6.2 – Engage and support culturally related volunteerism			
4.3 – Advocate for the creation of spaces for cultural industries and organizations across the Town			
1.4 – Invest in cultural facilities as anchors for cultural development in Cobourg			
5.2 – Strengthen festivals and events programming			

Actions bolded indicate an immediate timeline (6 months). These actions provide the momentum and foundational base that will support the growth of cultural planning in Cobourg.



Implementing Cobourg's Cultural Master Plan

Planning culturally builds on many of the themes and assumptions that underpin Cobourg's Cultural Master Plan. A core consideration for the implementation of the Plan is establishing a framework or set of assumptions and practices to support planning culturally internally across departments and with external partners.

Definitions and Assumptions

Planning culturally within a municipality means adopting a new mindset based on a shared vocabulary and set of assumptions to support communication among people from widely differing professional backgrounds. Aligning policies and actions across departments and business units helps to break down barriers between departments and generate stronger plans or programs while securing consensus across the Corporation and externally.

One step toward building these shared assumptions is establishing a glossary of terms (provided at the start of the plan), that can be built out over time as necessary. While a glossary is a useful tool that can be reflected in various policy documents, building capacity to plan culturally requires sustained conversation and exchange.

Best practices have defined planning culturally as “a principle of governing, a model for doing business, and an approach to collaboration where culture is integrated.”²⁰ It is also noted that planning culturally works best in collaboration with outside partners.

Planning culturally should be seen as:

- Adding Value – where cultural resources add value to existing or proposed plans/policies/programs addressing all facets of planning and community building (social, economic, environmental)
- Assessing Impacts – addresses the potential impacts (positive or negative) of a new proposal on a town's identity and cultural vitality

Seek Endorsement of a Cultural Policy Guideline

In consultation with municipal staff it was suggested that the Town prepare a Cultural Policy Guideline that sets out a series of principles and assumptions that will guide the Town's actions and commitments in cultural planning and development. The guidelines should endorse the Cultural Resource Framework to confirm the scope of the resource base that will be the focus of the Town's initiatives and investments.

Further, there should be a commitment to integrate cultural planning and development as a policy consideration in the Official Plan when it is next reviewed, in the same way that recreation often forms part of an Official Plan.

Finally, the Strategic Alignment section of all Council Reports should consider the impact of a decision socially, economically, environmentally and culturally.

Action 1: Prepare a Cultural Policy Guideline that will define the scope and parameters for planning culturally. Following review and approval by Council, a separate set of administrative guidelines should be drafted to provide direction to staff in interpreting and implementing cultural policies, plans, and initiatives. (See Action 1.1 – Implementation Table).



The Town's Role and an Action Plan for Planning Culturally

There is a shift occurring in governments at all levels from a traditional “planner-provider-deliverer” model to an increasingly collaborative “enabler-convenor-catalyst-broker” model or approach to advancing public agendas. Collaboration, within and between local government departments; between local government and the wider public sector and its agencies; and between local government and the wider community and business spheres offers municipal government the potential to pool talent and resources and address social, economic and cultural opportunities in a more consensual way. During the community engagement process for the Cultural Master Plan, there was a call for the Town to play a stronger role in facilitating these wider partnerships and collaboration.

A Cultural Master Plan for Cobourg presents a comprehensive cultural agenda for the Town. A significant focus of the Town support for cultural development has been delivering important programming and in providing financial support through existing grant programs to cultural institutions and groups that in turn develop programs for residents and visitors to enjoy. These roles will remain critically important, but the Cultural Master Plan sets out a larger cultural agenda that touches on a broader range of activities and priorities.

Town of Cobourg roles and responsibilities in support of cultural planning should expand over time to include:

- Planning and Policy - integrating culture into plans and policies across all departments. Applying a cultural lens to municipal planning and decision-making
- Partner - establishing and sustaining relationships with external partners, with organizations within the cultural sector and with community and business partners
- Facilitator and convenor – building connections, strengthening collaboration
- Promoter and champion – acting as an advocate for cultural development within the Town and beyond; and,
- Funder and Provider – continuing to invest in cultural development and deliver programs and activities

Internal Actions

In order to support cross-departmental collaboration in planning culturally, new collaborative mechanisms may be needed. The following key actions are reflected in the action plan and detailed below:

Action 2: Establish a Municipal Cultural Team composed of municipal staff and meet quarterly to share information and build understanding related to cultural development and planning culturally. (See Action 1.1 -Implementation Table).

Planning culturally is a cross-departmental activity and responsibility. A Culture Team is needed to support this work. Many issues will engage specific departments addressing specific actions or initiatives. Beyond this task-based engagement, there is a need for sustained communication and exchange across all departments to build the shared understanding needed and to support ongoing “opportunity citing” related to new policies or initiatives. Quarterly meetings of a designated Culture Team can achieve these results. The Community Services Division (CSD) is best positioned to convene



and chair these meetings. While a range of departments may be engaged on a task-specific basis, a smaller number of departments with the most direct connections to cultural development will form the ongoing Culture Team.

Action 3: Conduct a Service Delivery Review of Cobourg’s cultural programming and support activities to determine if they are adequately resourced and meeting the needs of the community. (See Action 4.1 – Implementation Table).

Given the current level of cultural programming in the Town together with the funding support provided to outside individuals and organizations a service delivery review may be in order prior to making any further commitments to increase funding for culture. This will help the municipality understand what is working well, and what is not from the perspective of staff and the public and what changes may be in order based on the needs and desires of residents. This can be done through one on one interview with management and staff, customer surveys, and program analysis.

External Actions

Of importance to planning culturally are building strong relationships between the Town, its external partners, and leaders representing cultural, business and community interests. Other municipalities have established Cultural Advisory Committees to help forge partnerships and align resources in implementing the Cultural Plan and supporting ongoing cultural planning and development. Representation from Indigenous and ethnocultural communities in Cobourg is essential. A range of ages among members of the Committee will also ensure that new and emerging trends and technologies in the cultural and creative will inform discussions. Finally, a set of collective metrics should be established and agreed to by all.

In order to align resources and agendas to support planning culturally the following actions are recommended:

Action 4: Establish a Cultural Advisory Committee to advocate and support the implementation of the Cultural Plan and the ongoing objective of planning culturally. (See Action 1.2 – Implementation Table).

The Town of Cobourg cannot alone support the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan or planning culturally. The Town requires leadership from its external partners and from individuals representing cultural, business, community interests. The Cultural Advisory Committee would be responsible to meet on a regular basis to review the status of the implementation of the Cultural Master Plan, to forge partnerships and resources to address specific recommendations and to bring a range of perspectives to the goal of planning culturally. The experience of other municipalities in establishing such leadership groups can be looked to for guidance.

Action 5: The Cultural Advisory Committee should convene an Annual Cultural Summit to communicate achievements in implementing the Cultural Plan and to seek community input in identifying new and emerging issues. (See Action 1.3 – Implementation Table).

Communicating and connecting the success of the Cultural Master to residents is an essential step in building endorsement and support. An annual cultural summit will provide the Town, its partners and others an opportunity to take stock of achievements in implementing the Cultural Master Plan over the past year, commit to supporting the implementation of new recommended Actions and identify new actions or initiatives not foreseen in the preparation of the Cultural Master Plan.