



Strategic Cultural Plan for the City of Courtenay

Draft

September 25, 2024

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Land Acknowledgement

The City of Courtenay respectfully acknowledges that the lands to which this Strategic Cultural Plan applies are on the Unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

The City is committed to a long-term collaboration with the K'ómoks First Nation to ensure the Strategic Cultural Plan supports Truth and Reconciliation and reflects K'ómoks First Nation values, objectives, and priorities. The City acknowledges that the Strategic Cultural Plan will need to be a living document to allow time for relationship building and meaningful engagement with K'ómoks First Nation that considers Indigenous values, practices, and priorities.

Executive Summary

Located in the Comox Valley and on the Unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, Courtenay offers a vibrant arts and culture scene with a variety of offerings to residents and visitors. **The city is the heart of arts and culture in the Comox Valley, connecting residents and communities through diverse arts and cultural experiences.** There is also significant community and City support for the cultural sector, with numerous local arts and cultural organizations, and cultural facilities that serve residents of the city and region, as well as visitors.

The Strategic Cultural Plan creates **a framework and roadmap** to continue supporting arts and culture in Courtenay over the next 10 years. The Plan includes specific objectives and actions, informed **by extensive research and consultations**, including with diverse community members, arts and culture patrons, and local arts and culture organizations. The Plan was developed using a **5-phase approach**, involving desk research, community engagement, analysis, followed by the development of a draft strategy and recommendations for community feedback and review, and lastly, the creation of the final Strategic Cultural Plan.

Community engagement for the Strategic Cultural Plan included: an online survey which received approximately 700 responses overall, feedback from 120 community members via qualitative engagements, an arts and culture sector focus group attended by 38 participants from local arts and culture organizations, and a public drop-in engagement event in July 2023. The team also held 24 interviews, which engaged 54 participants in total. These interviews included consultations with four core cultural services providers (i.e., the Sid Williams Theatre, the Comox Valley Arts Gallery, the Comox Valley Community Arts Council, and the Courtenay and District Museum). In addition, 28 participants were engaged as part of four group conversations with equity priority communities (i.e., representatives of / persons with lived experience of disabilities, being unhoused, being a newcomer, and being part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community).

Community engagement identified priority needs based on collective findings from engagement activities and across all individual and community group consultations for the Strategic Cultural Plan. Findings indicate there is a need for:

- Engaging K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples
- More cultural spaces, and better availability and affordability
- Developing more diverse and affordable cultural programming
- Further promotion of community partnerships and collaboration
- Increased support – financial and non-financial, local, and regional
- Further development of cultural tourism
- Attraction and training of technical cultural workers
- Development of a Public Art Policy

To support the development of Courtenay's Strategic Cultural Plan, in addition to community engagement activities, the following work was also completed to inform the key findings and recommendations:

- Cultural Facility Options Analysis
- Benchmarking of Comparative Jurisdictions
- Economic and Social Impact Analysis.

Community-informed vision for arts and culture in Courtenay:

"Courtenay is a thriving cultural hub of creative opportunities, dedicated to cultivating vibrant and inclusive arts and culture for residents and visitors alike. Culture and history of Indigenous peoples, who have lived on these lands since time immemorial, are interwoven into a diverse community where connection and resiliency are celebrated through artistic expression and cultural exchange."

Strategic Goals and Objectives

The Strategic Cultural Plan is structured around **five strategic goals** to enable arts and culture to thrive in Courtenay. Each strategic goal is supported by key objectives, as outlined below. Each objective has specific actions, to guide the City of Courtenay in achieving the objectives. Prioritized actions are detailed in the full Strategic Cultural Plan.

Goal 1: Advance truth and reconciliation through arts and culture

- Objective 1.1: Recognize the role and rights of K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples as it relates to arts and culture
- Objective 1.2: Respectfully acknowledge K'ómoks territory through arts and culture
- Objective 1.3: Increase support and investment in Indigenous arts and culture

Goal 2: Build community resilience through arts and culture

- Objective 2.1: Use arts and culture to support community belonging and inclusion, where differences and similarities are celebrated
- Objective 2.2: Leverage arts and culture as a medium to engage with community on complex social challenges and to support healing
- Objective 2.3: Develop cultural programming that appeals to a more diverse community

Goal 3: Develop more accessible and affordable cultural spaces

- Objective 3.1: Increase the availability of accessible and affordable spaces for arts and culture
- Objective 3.2: Prioritize initiatives/upgrades that provide enhanced and additional space for arts and culture

Goal 4: Bolster community arts

- Objective 4.1: Support the capacity building of community-led arts and culture organizations
- Objective 4.2: Break down silos and increase collaboration across the cultural sector
- Objective 4.3: Increase the awareness of community-led arts and culture events

Goal 5: Support the strategic development of the cultural sector

- Objective 5.1: Build and sustain existing social and economic impact by strengthening Courtenay's professional arts and culture sector
- Objective 5.2: Embed culture more firmly in tourism initiatives in Courtenay and the Comox Valley
- Objective 5.3: Create new and or updated policies to support the cultural sector
- Objective 5.4: Explore strategic ways to meet sector labour needs

1. Introduction

1.1 Arts and Culture in Courtenay

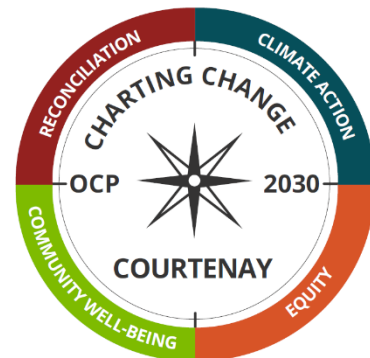
Courtenay, nestled in the Comox Valley and on the Unceded territory of the K’ómoks First Nation, boasts a **vibrant arts and culture scene** that reflects the city's rich heritage and natural beauty. With a blend of traditional Indigenous influences and modern artistic expressions, Courtenay is **home to a number of artists, performers, cultural workers, curators, volunteers, skilled individuals, and numerous cultural institutions** that celebrate creativity in all its forms: such as the Sid Williams Theatre, Comox Valley Centre for the Arts, including the Comox Valley Art Gallery, and the Courtenay and District Museum. The downtown area is a hub of arts and culture activity and lends itself towards the cultivation of a public art program. Throughout the year, various **festivals and events** such as the Vancouver Island Music Festival attract artists and visitors from across the region. Whether exploring the vibrant arts scene, attending a cultural event, or strolling through the streets, Courtenay offers a dynamic and inspiring cultural experience for residents and visitors.

It is impossible to talk about arts and culture without recognizing **that Indigenous peoples have lived on these lands** since time immemorial. The intrinsic link between place and culture is fundamental to Indigenous perspectives and must be acknowledged as the City progresses in this Strategic Cultural Plan endeavor. **Courtenay is dedicated to fostering relationships in a respectful manner and engaging in continuous dialogue with K’ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples.** The City views the Strategic Cultural Plan as a dynamic document, open to evolving into the future with guidance from and partnerships with Indigenous peoples and communities.

Courtenay envisions itself as a **dynamic cultural hub within the Comox Valley**, fostering creativity and innovation in arts and culture. With a steadfast commitment to nurturing local talent and embracing diverse perspectives, Courtenay aims to be a beacon for artistic expression and cultural exchange in the valley. Through strategic investments in cultural facilities, collaborative partnerships with artists, support for community organizations, and the promotion of diverse programming, the City of Courtenay is dedicated to delivering a vibrant and accessible arts scene for all its residents and visitors. By celebrating the unique heritage of the region while embracing contemporary artistic movements, Courtenay aspires to cultivate an environment where creativity flourishes, enriching the lives of its residents and contributing to the cultural fabric of Courtenay and the Comox Valley.

To that end, the City embarked on the development of a **Strategic Cultural Plan** to provide a framework and roadmap to continue supporting arts and culture in Courtenay over the next 10 years. The City of Courtenay’s Strategic Cultural Plan aims to:

- Mirror the values of Reconciliation, Community Wellbeing, Equity and Climate Action – as identified in the cardinal directions of the Official Community Plan (OCP) 2022.
- Engage in inclusive community dialogue.



- Build on and action existing policy recommendations, e.g., OCP (2022), Parks and Recreation Plan (2019), and Cultural Service Review (2019).
- Consider both the social and economic impact of arts and culture.

The report summarizes the work that has taken place so far, and what the community has shared about the strengths, challenges, and priority needs relating to arts and culture in Courtenay. The findings have been used to develop goals and objectives including recommendations on how the City can improve support to artists, arts and culture organizations, and creatives, as well as support wider community priorities related to arts and culture. Actions are recommended to implement the Strategic Cultural Plan which will ensure that arts and culture become integrated into the community, as well as representative of all residents.

Furthermore, Courtenay's location in the Comox Valley highlights the interconnectedness of arts and culture within the region. To that end, recommendations include regional approaches and needs, recognizing that Courtenay is not isolated, but rather part of a broader regional arts and cultural ecosystem. Additionally, Courtenay's central position in the valley underscores its significance as a hub for arts and culture in the Comox Valley.

2. The Context for the Strategic Cultural Plan

The Strategic Cultural Plan was developed considering Courtenay's cultural profile including its current assets and resources, the City of Courtenay's strategic priorities, and existing cultural sector priorities.

2.1 Community Profile

With a natural and beautiful landscape, Courtenay's vibrant arts and culture scene presents a variety of opportunities for residents and visitors from within and beyond the region. The city is situated on the Unceded territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of the land, whose arts and culture informs the artistic inspiration of the city. Courtenay's cultural sector has a strong creative community supported by multiple local arts organizations and many volunteers passionate about arts and culture in the community. The city is home to many artists, cultural practitioners, and curators who add depth to the cultural community.

Courtenay has multiple arts and culture assets including cultural spaces and facilities, community arts and cultural organizations, creative cultural enterprises, festivals and events, cultural heritage, public art, and diverse art forms including visual and performing arts. Specifically, there are over 150 cultural assets¹ in Courtenay, including over 30 community cultural organizations, some 28 cultural facilities², and spaces used for cultural events and programming, and 10 arts-related educational institutions among other resources in the community. Notably, Courtenay is home to three core cultural facilities i.e., Centre For the Arts which houses the Comox Valley Art Gallery and the Comox Valley Community Art Council, Courtenay & District Museum and Paleontology Centre, and Sid Williams Civic Theatre that serve residents and visitors to the city and the Comox Valley.

Various strategic planning documents in Courtenay highlight the need for a plan to guide the City's support of arts and culture. Thus, the Strategic Cultural Plan aims to guide the City in its relationships with the cultural sector, residents (including equity priority groups such as Indigenous communities, newcomers and immigrants, unhoused people, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ community), and neighbours from the Comox Valley in relation to arts and culture.

2.2 The Role of the City

Courtenay stands as a vibrant nucleus of arts and culture within the Comox Valley and beyond, showcasing a dynamic scene that echoes throughout Vancouver Island. Courtenay also serves as a cultural beacon, drawing talent and enthusiasts from neighboring communities and beyond through the provision of cultural spaces and programs. The City's commitment to

¹ Cultural assets identified through Nordicity asset mapping research. 'Cultural assets' include festivals and events (including arts and culture festivals and events and other events with culture component), creative cultural enterprises, arts education, spaces and facilities (including formal arts and culture venues, and occasional venues), community and cultural organizations (including non-profits, associations/societies, Indigenous organizations and community arts organizations), cultural heritage, multimedia (including radio & television, publishing and printing, film and media), and arts (i.e., performing arts, visual arts and public art).

² See Annex D for the list of existing facilities and spaces. Note, these assets will evolve over the lifetime of the Strategic Cultural Plan.

cultural institutions has paved the way for a flourishing creative ecosystem, while contributing to the region's tourism appeal and economic vitality. At the heart of the Comox Valley, Courtenay plays a pivotal role in fostering collaboration and cultural exchange among neighboring municipalities, amplifying the collective impact of the region's artistic endeavors.

The City defines its arts and culture role as:

- **Policy and Planner:** Guiding and managing the City arts operations and activities through documents such as the Official Community Plan (2022), Cultural Services Review (2019), Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2019), and Strategic Cultural Plan (2024).
- **Advocate:** Promoting and raising awareness of arts and cultural initiatives in the community to encourage wider participation in and support for the sector.
- **Funder:** Providing funding including fee-for-service grants, operating grants, and cultural event grants, as well as in kind support and direct investment through staff and programming, to organizations such as the Comox Valley Community Arts Council, Courtenay and District Historical Society, Comox Valley Art Gallery Society, Sid Williams Theatre Society, and Courtenay Downtown BIA, as well as the Comox Valley Community Foundation.
- **Cultural Facilities Owner:** Providing key creative spaces in the community such as the Comox Valley Community Art Council - administrative and digital creation hub, Comox Valley Centre for the Arts (operated by the Comox Valley Art Gallery Society), Courtenay & District Museum (operated by the Courtenay and District Historical Society), Sid Williams Theatre (operated by the Sid Williams Theatre Society), and other small single office administrative spaces that are complementary to the arts and culture facilities.

Looking ahead, Courtenay aims to continue its ascent as a premier cultural destination, fostering innovation, diversity, and accessibility in arts and culture. With this strong foundation in place, the city is poised to chart a course towards the future, while cementing its status as a cultural hub of the Comox Valley and on Vancouver Island.

2.3 City of Courtenay & Cultural Sector Priorities

As per Courtenay's Official Community Plan (OCP) (see objectives in the grey box below), the Strategic Cultural Plan supports numerous existing community priorities in Courtenay.

Official Community Plan: Arts, Culture, and Heritage

Arts, Culture, and Heritage are one of the 11 thematic policy priority areas for the City of Courtenay’s Official Community Plan.

Objectives:

1. Residents and visitors know they are in K’ómoks First Nation territory by the prominent tangible and intangible celebration of their culture and heritage
2. Local art, culture and heritage, including natural heritage, are showcased throughout Courtenay
3. Courtenay has a reputation as the regional centre for arts and culture
4. Community cultural and heritage assets are identified, preserved, and celebrated
5. Identities expressed in the public realm and cultural programming are representative of Courtenay and the region
6. Community access and participation in arts and culture is strong and widespread

References:

[1] [City of Courtenay Official Community Plan](#) (2022), page 157

The following table outlines key priorities identified from a review of existing municipal plans and strategies and notes existing priorities for Courtenay. The relevance to the direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan is highlighted.

Table 1. Existing community priorities in Courtenay

Priority	Relevance and Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan	City Municipal Plans
Advance reconciliation efforts	<p>Reconciliation is a guiding cardinal direction</p> <p>Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritize engagement with Indigenous peoples ▪ Support actions identified in the OCP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCP, 2022 ▪ Engagement Framework (in development 2024)
Reduce social inequalities	<p>Equity is a guiding cardinal direction</p> <p>Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prioritize engagement with equity-priority communities ▪ Focus on links between arts and culture and wider community issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OCP, 2022 ▪ Engagement Framework (in development 2024)

Priority	Relevance and Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan	City Municipal Plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support actions identified in the OCP 	
Address funding challenges	<p>Funding is an ongoing challenge identified throughout policy documents</p> <p>Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate outstanding Cultural Services Report recommendations including financial support and City staff capacity Review Comox Valley Regional District's Principle-Based Framework for Allocating Recreation Grants (Wilson, 2011) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Services Report, 2019 OCP, 2022
Enhance downtown	<p>Downtown vision remains relevant and desired</p> <p>Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support steps to advance the Downtown Playbook vision of a cultural hub and activate 4th, 5th, and 6th Streets. Conduct cultural mapping, facilities needs assessments, and address ageing infrastructure Policies are needed to support arts and culture (i.e. Public Art Policy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Playbook, 2016 Harmston Park and Downtown Local Area Planning Process (in development 2024) OCP, 2022 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2019 Cultural Services Report, 2019
Support regional interconnectivity	<p>Arts and culture in Courtenay serves the region</p> <p>Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build on Cultural Services Report to identify ongoing gaps in funding, service provision, etc. Revisit Wilson's frameworks Recognize the regional role that cultural services play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Services Report, 2019 For additional reference: CVRD 'A Principle-based Framework for Funding Regional Recreation and Cultural Facilities', J. Wilson, 2011
Encourage active community engagement	<p>Courtenay prioritizes community participation</p> <p>Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the community throughout the research Apply processes identified in the Public Engagement Strategy & Toolkit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Engagement Strategy & Toolkit, 2020 OCP, 2022 Cultural Plan Scoping Workshop, 2022 Engagement Framework (in development 2024)
Celebrate cultural offerings	<p>Courtenay is home to a vibrant cultural scene</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural Services Report, 2019

Priority	Relevance and Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan	City Municipal Plans
	<p>Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Map cultural assets identified in the Community Profile section ▪ Document strengths of Courtenay’s cultural scene ▪ Need for a special events and hosting policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural Inventory Report, 2017 ▪ Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2019 ▪ Parks, Rec. & Culture Analysis document, 2017 ▪ OCP, 2022
<p>Recognize community impact</p>	<p>There is a desire to capture the social and economic impacts</p> <p>Direction for the Strategic Cultural Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct economic and social impact assessments ▪ Recognize the role of arts and culture in tourism development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cultural Services Report, 2019 ▪ Cultural Plan Scoping Workshop, 2022

3. The Planning Process and Key Insights

3.1 Cultural Planning Process

What is Cultural Planning?

Cultural planning is a process of community consultation that aims to help towns, cities, and regions support arts and cultural development, to benefit the community. The planning process highlights a community's unique strengths, gaps, and needs in relation to arts and culture. The aim is to strategically integrate arts and culture with wider municipal planning and strategies. Essentially, it means asking, "Where are we now? Where do we want to be?" – and considers strategies to get there. Cultural plans strive to elevate arts and culture as an essential component of sustainability, aiming to integrate seamlessly into the overall framework of urban planning. By doing so, such plans ensure that arts and cultural considerations are intrinsic to the processes, practices, and decisions that shape cities, ultimately enriching the overall health, well-being, and vitality of communities.

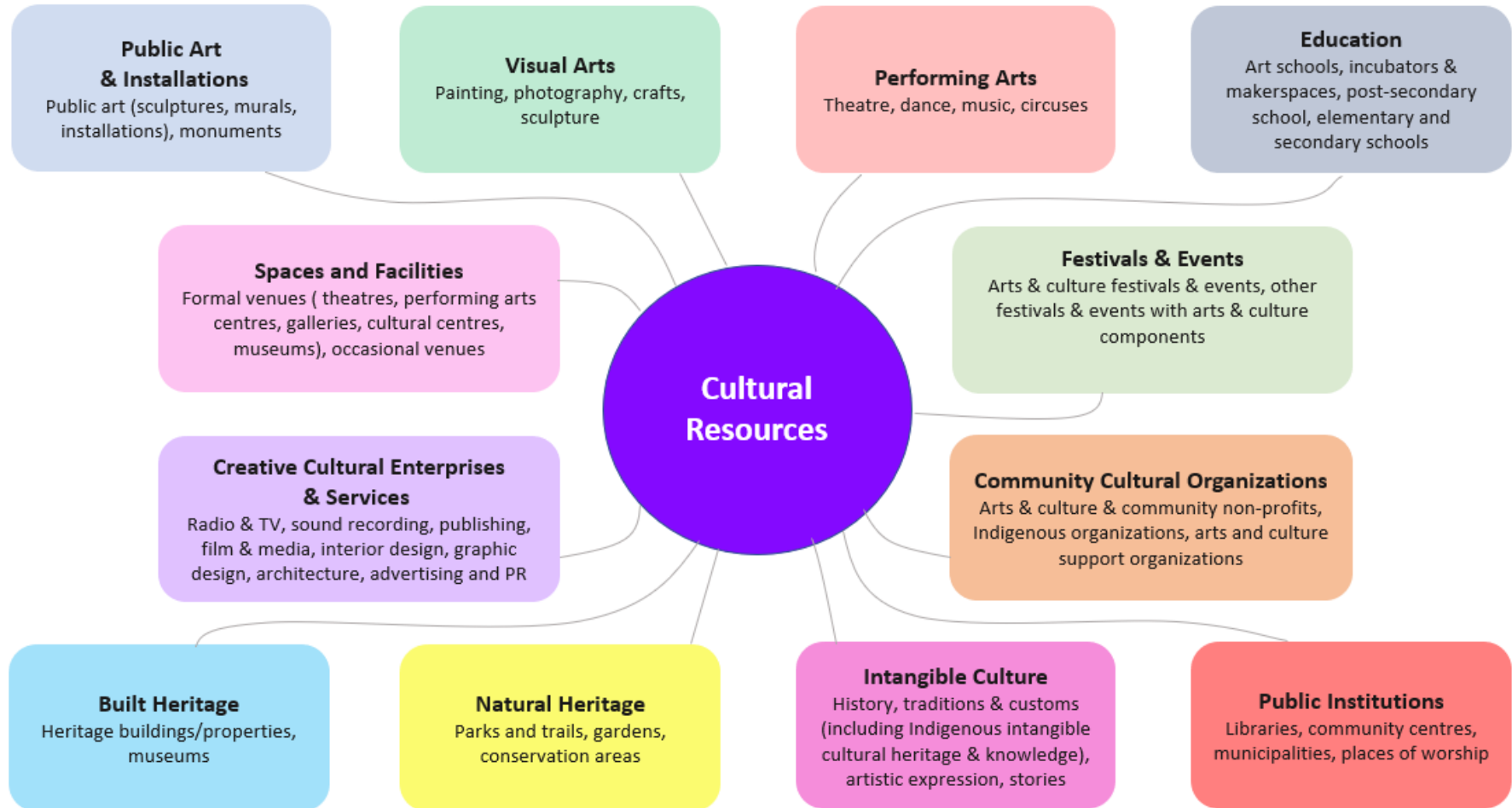
Defining Arts and Culture in Courtenay – What's Included?

Arts and culture can be difficult to define because they mean many things to different people. First, in this report, it should be made clear that arts and culture includes heritage. Second, this Plan defines arts and culture broadly – including tangible assets (like artworks and buildings), organized groups (such as performance and dance troupes), and intangible things (like stories and cultural traditions). These cultural assets contribute to the vitality and resilience of arts and culture by providing the foundation for artistic expression, community building and collaboration, and the transmission of cultural heritage from generation to generation.

The City of Courtenay acknowledges that the definition of 'culture' and its impacts may be different from K'ómoks First Nation's view and that of the Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples in the community. As such, part of the ongoing relationship building with K'ómoks First Nations and Indigenous peoples will be identifying and defining what 'culture' means in Courtenay, given that it is situated on the traditional Unceded territory of K'ómoks First Nation.

The 'Cultural Resources Framework' below maps different types of arts and culture resources or assets.

Figure 1. Cultural Resources Framework

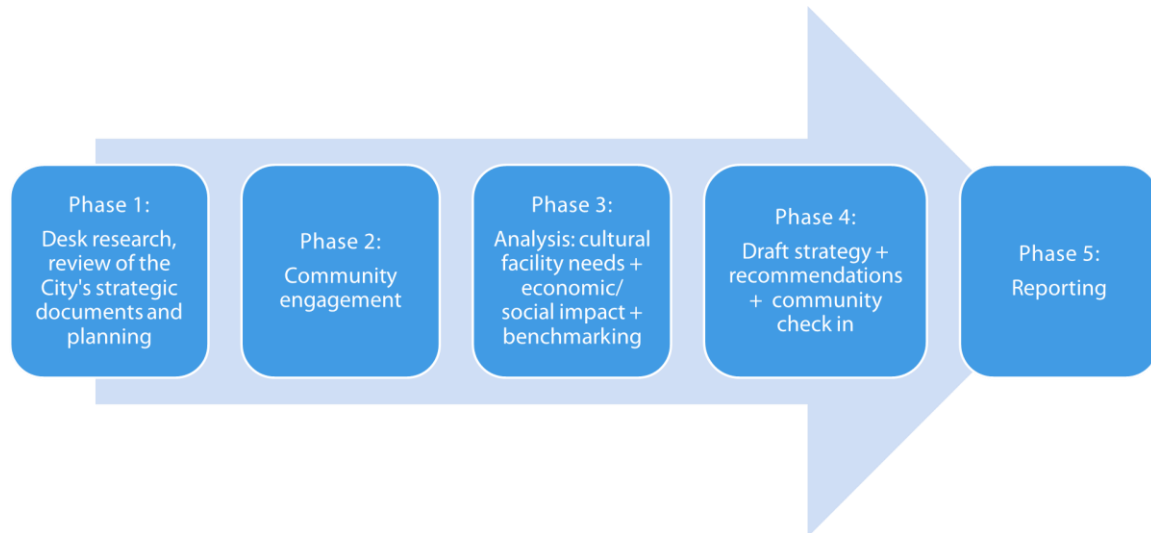


Source: Adapted from Municipal Cultural Planning Incorporated's Cultural Resources Mapping: Guide for Municipalities (2010), Statistics Canada Canadian Framework for Cultural Statistics (2011), and North Shore Culture Compass

Our Five-Phased Approach

The Strategic Cultural Plan followed a **five-phase process**, involving desk research (including reviewing existing City strategies and policies), community engagement, analysis (including facility options, economic and social impact analysis, and municipal benchmarking via a comparative review), followed by the development of a draft strategy and recommendations for community feedback and review, and lastly, the creation of the final Strategic Cultural Plan.

Figure 2. Five-phase planning process



The community engagement work was led by the City of Courtenay's Recreation, Culture, and Community Services Department, in collaboration with [Nordicity](#), with input from artists, arts and culture organizations, interested community parties, arts and culture facility user groups, and the wider public.

3.2 Research Insights

3.2.1 The Impact of Arts and Culture

Arts and culture are everywhere in our lives. Whether listening to music on the radio, viewing art on the walls of a coffee shop, or simply telling children a story, arts and culture touch everything. However one defines arts and culture, its true value is hard to measure, and the full impact is often overlooked. Nonetheless, we know arts and culture bestow important social and community benefits.³ There are economic benefits in terms of employment, income, tourism, and spillovers to other businesses. For example, in British Columbia, the creative sector contributed \$6.8 billion to total Gross Domestic Product.⁴ As well, arts participation is also linked with greater life satisfaction, quality of life, and happiness.⁵

This section provides a basic assessment of the economic impact of cultural organizations in Courtenay, as well as the social and community impacts of arts and culture initiatives. Finally, potential cultural tourism opportunities are noted.

Economic impact

Arts and culture create economic impact in the community by creating jobs, supporting businesses, and driving tourism, but also by catalyzing long-term investment into the community. Cultural organizations drive impact through their spending on staff wages, and procurement of goods and services. Additionally, individuals who engage with the sector further contribute to economic growth by spending their money and time at local businesses, such as restaurants, cafes, and shops, thereby stimulating economic activity and supporting entrepreneurship. This combined impact underscores the significant role of arts and culture in making communities vibrant places, attracting investment, and fostering community development. It highlights the interconnectedness of cultural vitality with broader economic prosperity, emphasizing the importance of prioritizing and investing in arts and culture as essential components of vibrant and resilient communities. Nordicity's economic impact analysis⁶ estimated that cultural organizations in Courtenay:

³ OECD (2021). Economic and social impact of cultural and creative sectors: Note for Italy G20 Presidency Culture Work Group, 2021 <https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/OECD-G20-Culture-July-2021.pdf>

⁴ Creative BC (2022). Creative Industries Economic Results Assessment. <https://creativebc.com/sector/research-reports/ciera/ciera-2022>

⁵ Government of Canada (2016). Social Impacts and Benefits of Arts and Culture: A Literature Review. Department of Canadian Heritage, February 2016 http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2018/pch/CH4-187-2016-eng.pdf

⁶ Findings from Nordicity's Courtenay Strategic Cultural Plan Social and Economic Impact Assessment analysis, which drew on findings from the Courtenay Strategic Cultural Plan survey (separate annex document).

- Generated a direct⁷ \$3.6 million in labour income from 101 full time employees (FTEs), and \$4 million in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2022.
- Including indirect⁸ and induced⁹ impact, cultural organizations in Courtenay contributed an estimated \$6.8 million in labour income, 158 in FTEs of employment, and \$11 million in GDP.

To put the economic impacts in perspective, participants in the Courtenay Strategic Cultural Plan survey reported that they **spend an average of \$105 within the community before or after attending/participating in cultural events** (such as at local restaurants, bars, etc.). This observation suggests that there is a strong economic impact from cultural events.

A more wholistic economic impact assessment of the local arts and culture sector would include the incomes of artists, not just arts organizations as done for this report. Furthermore, these impact numbers do not include the wider Comox Valley region. Estimates of economic impact of the arts in the region would certainly be larger, and further assessments are warranted to capture the full impact.

Through the City's multi-year grant funding, the core cultural service providers (Sid Williams Theatre Society, Comox Valley Art Gallery Society, Courtenay and District Historical Society and the Comox Valley Community Art Council) are able to leverage the City's arts and culture funding contribution to obtain additional grant funding. In 2024 this total amount was approximately \$1,600,000.¹⁰

Social and community impacts

Arts and culture create social and community impacts in various ways. In Courtenay, [Walk With Me](#), a project of Comox Valley Art Gallery, addresses the toxic drug poisoning crisis through deep sharing and close listening. Meanwhile, Comox Valley Community Arts Council's [Art + Land](#) project promotes environmental stewardship via arts events and experiences that inspire collaboration, reflection, and learning. Arts and culture can also play a profound role in truth and reconciliation initiatives. For example, sculptures and murals can increase awareness that

⁷ Direct Impact refers to the increase in GDP, FTEs, and labour-driven income directly associated with arts and culture organizations.

⁸ Indirect impacts estimate the employment, GDP and labour income supported by purchases from suppliers. For instance, a cultural organization might stimulate employment in the marketing industry through purchases of communications services from local suppliers, or an artist may enlist light manufacturers to fabricate sculptures.

⁹ Induced impacts use modelling techniques to estimate how labour income affects the economy through household purchases. For example, a cultural organization employee will spend their employment income to purchase household goods from local businesses.

¹⁰ The amount is based on 2024 estimated figures. Leveraged funds are mostly project or program based and may vary year to year.

Courtenay is on K'ómoks First Nation territory, while cultural programming can create chances to learn and understand.

Participants in the Courtenay Strategic Cultural Plan survey identified the 'top three' social impacts of arts and culture locally as:

- Encouraging social participation and a sense of belonging;
- Enhancing Courtenay as an attractive place to live; and
- Building empathy, awareness, and understanding between different and distinct cultural backgrounds.

Findings from Arts and Culture Impact Study for Creative Coast

Findings from Courtenay echo an all-Island study conducted by Nordicity for the Digital Innovation Group (now Creative Coast) in 2021,* where:

- 97% (of 1,371 survey respondents) agreed that the regional arts sector in their community improves personal wellbeing (mental and/or physical);
- 96% agreed that the sector attracts visitors to the region as a tourist destination; and,
- 94% agreed that the sector helps to create a distinct local identity.

*Nordicity (2021). Arts and Culture Impact Assessment: Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands Super Region.

Cultural tourism – a growing opportunity

Courtenay and the Comox Valley boast a rich array of cultural attractions. The [Vancouver Island Music Festival](#), [Filberg Festival](#), and performances at the [Sid Williams Theatre](#) draw visitors from across the Island and beyond. In addition, [Courtenay and District Museum and Palaeontology Centre](#)'s 80-million-year-old Elasmosaur is now the fossil emblem of B.C.. Arts and culture in Courtenay and the region makes a significant positive impact, and with strategic focus and support, this impact can grow – for the benefit of all.

As stated earlier, survey participants reported **spending an average of \$105 within the community before or after attending/participating in cultural events**. This finding further points to how attending arts and cultural activities benefits not just the arts and culture sector, but also the broader community in terms of the ripple effects of such spending, which can be increased when derived from tourism and bringing spending in from outside the community.

There is an opportunity to capitalize further on cultural tourism, considering that:

- Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing tourism markets;¹¹

¹¹ OECD. The Impact of Culture on Tourism. https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/industry-and-services/the-impact-of-culture-on-tourism_9789264040731-en#page11

- ‘Cultural Explorers’ make up the second largest group for global tourists, according to Destination Canada;¹² and,
- Research conducted by Americans for the Arts found that arts and culture travelers spend more than other travelers, are more likely to stay in a hotel or bed and breakfast, are more likely to spend \$1,000 or more during their stay, and stay longer than other visitors.¹³
- Experience Comox Valley tourism strategy recognizes the Comox Valley as the premier, year-round Vancouver Island destination for outdoor, culinary, and cultural activities¹⁴.

Courtenay’s Strategic Cultural Plan serves as a catalyst for enhancing the economic, social, and tourism impacts of arts and culture, driving forward the city’s overall development. By investing in arts and culture, Courtenay not only fosters economic growth through tourism revenue and job creation within the creative sector, but also cultivates a vibrant and inclusive community that attracts residents and businesses alike. The social benefits of a thriving arts scene are immeasurable, fostering civic pride, social cohesion, and a sense of belonging among residents.

Additionally, by showcasing its unique cultural identity and offerings, Courtenay elevates its profile as a must-visit destination in the Comox Valley, drawing visitors and stimulating further economic activity for the region. As Courtenay continues to prioritize arts and culture in its strategic planning, it paves the way for sustainable and holistic development, where creativity and community thrive.

¹² ‘Cultural Explorer’ visitors pursue opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse themselves in the culture, people, and settings of the places they visit. Source: Destination Canada, EQ Profile. https://www.destinationcanada.com/sites/default/files/archive/2013-01-01/Tools_ExplorerQuotient_Profiles_2015_EN.pdf

¹³ Americans for the Arts (2017). Arts and Economic Prosperity 5. https://www.americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/aep5/PDF_Files/ARTS_AEPsummary_loRes.pdf

¹⁴ [4VI – Experience Comox Valley City of Courtenay MRDT presentation to Courtenay Council: May 8, 2024.](#)

3.2.2 Benchmarking Analysis (Comparative Review)

A comparative review was conducted to benchmark Courtenay against four other municipalities of comparable size and demographics. Unique approaches and practices in arts and culture planning were also considered in this selection of comparable municipalities. **The District of Squamish, City of Campbell River, City of Langley, and City of Nelson** were selected for review in relation to Courtenay.

The research included a review of municipal delivery models and core service and cultural provision budgets, with consideration of areas such as funding both financial and in-kind support and investment. The review also sought to include indicators such as number of cultural facilities, arts and culture investment per capita, staffing levels (in FTEs), and identification of other supporting policies or plans available. Key takeaways identified included:

- 3 out of 4 municipalities operate with in-house departments, typically maintaining around 1-2 FTEs of dedicated arts and culture staff.
- All comparators have significantly different arts and culture budgets, ranging between \$200k to \$940k annually.
- Langley and Campbell River provide the largest amount of other funding of arts and culture (e.g., grants, public art, in-kind support). They spend approximately \$700k to \$400k respectively. Notably, while Courtenay provides regular operating support to major arts and culture facilities in the community, it does not provide any significant culture grants for which community groups or members can apply.
- Municipalities are guided in their arts and culture endeavors by a variety of strategic and master planning documents (i.e., Culture Plan or Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan), as well as supporting documents (i.e., service and facility reviews/studies).

The full Benchmarking of Comparative Jurisdictions document [Appendix B] is a valuable reference to assess the effectiveness of different approaches, reveal best practices, and support informed decision-making related to investment into arts and culture facilities in Courtenay.

3.2.3 Cultural Facilities Options

A **Cultural Facilities Options Analysis** was conducted for this project. The process included site visits to core cultural partners and organizations and feedback received from interviews and community check-ins about cultural spaces and facilities in Courtenay. **Specific needs identified include space for live performances, multi-disciplinary programming, rehearsal and creation, and spaces particularly for diverse community groups.** Findings were used to develop a **working document which outlines short-term, medium-term, and longer-term priorities for consideration**, as well as future vision for cultural facilities and spaces that would meet the needs of individuals and community groups in Courtenay.

The next step is for the City to consider conducting a Cultural Facility Needs Assessment or Study for City-owned facilities to further understand how existing needs can be met, building on the Cultural Facilities Options work conducted in the strategic planning process. There is also an opportunity for the City to invest in existing facilities in the downtown area to create a downtown cultural hub, as well as advocate for a regional effort toward a future vision of a cultural centre. The Cultural Facilities Options working document [Appendix C] will become a foundational document for conducting any future in-depth Cultural Facility Needs Assessments.

Alignment of Cultural Facility Needs with City of Courtenay Official Community Plan (OCP)

The City of Courtenay Official Community Plan (OCP) articulates some existing facility needs that align with cultural facility needs identified through the Courtenay Strategic Cultural Planning process. These include:

- the Arts, Culture and Heritage Chapter [p. 155-162] describes the need “for a larger outdoor performance venue than currently available at Simms Park, the downtown Commons outdoor performing space and public plaza.”
- the Arts, Culture and Heritage (ACH) Chapter describes the need “for a community arts and culture centre.”
- the ACH Action 3: “Work towards the downtown Public Commons public plaza concept identified in the Downtown Courtenay Playbook.”
- the ACH Action 6: “Create a Courtenay Cultural Plan, including consideration of a dedicated community arts and culture space.”
- the ACH Action 7: “Continue to support the downtown as the region’s arts, culture, and heritage hub by ensuring key cultural partners such as the Comox Valley Art Gallery, the Courtenay and District Museum, the Sid Williams Civic Theatre, and the Comox Valley Community Arts Council continue to be located downtown, and promoting and investing in public art and cultural opportunities downtown.”
- the ACH Action 11: “Consider the establishment of a dedicated community arts and culture space.”

3.3 Community Engagement Insights

This section presents the engagement approach and activities and a summary of what we heard from the community and cultural sector findings. A detailed What We Heard report can be found in the appendices providing further information on the results of the community engagement.

Figure 3. Live graphic recording by Jill Banting from the May 9th focus group with arts and culture sector participants



3.3.1 Engagement Approach and Activities

Aligning with the City’s Official Community Plan, 2022, the Strategic Cultural Plan was developed through a process of inclusive community consultation. The key engagement principles employed were: (i): taking a **human-centred** approach; (ii) having **respect for First Nations and Indigenous Peoples** – especially K’ómoks First Nation, on whose Unceded territory Courtenay is located; (iii) **trust** and **privacy**; and (iv) taking an **intersectional approach**. The latter means taking into consideration the perspectives of diverse community members, including equity priority groups who are often not included in engagement activities due to barriers that limit their participation.¹⁵ This approach included:

- Respectfully seeking input from equity priority groups including Indigenous, Black and People of Colour, youth, 2SLGBTQIA+, persons with disabilities, and unhoused community members.
- Leveraging established relationships with existing community organizations advocating for equity priority groups to ensure that all community members, especially historically underrepresented communities, have a voice.

¹⁵ “Intersectionality brings attention to how people are defined by differing positionalities in a society based on their gender, ethnicity or race, sexual orientation, ability, and class, etc. These are identities and positionalities that form overlapping positions of inequality and privilege. They are in hierarchical relations to one another according to which some people have more power in societies than others.” Source: Salla Sariola (2020) Intersectionality and Community Engagement: Can Solidarity Alone Solve Power Differences in Global Health Research?, *The American Journal of Bioethics*, 20:5, 57-59, DOI: [10.1080/15265161.2020.1745951](https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2020.1745951)

- Recognizing the need for long-term commitments to relationship building with Indigenous communities.

Engagement with K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples

The City of Courtenay's Strategic Cultural Plan project team is committed to working with K'ómoks First Nation to ensure that the Strategic Cultural Plan aligns with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and is guided by the Truth and Reconciliation Findings and Calls to Actions.

The City recognizes the colonial aspects of having a specific and limited timeframe, which creates barriers to meaningful engagement. As such, the City is committed to working together with K'ómoks First Nation to define a path forward recognizing that true relationship building takes time. The ambition is for the Strategic Cultural Plan to become a living document rather than a static, one-time report – one that is open to adjustment to ensure K'ómoks First Nation's priorities are included in the process. This iterative approach should allow time for true relationship building and community engagement with K'ómoks First Nation and could include a regular review of the Plan and implementation progress.

Furthermore, to ensure this project also includes the Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous communities who live within the community, the engagement approach aligned with the [distinction-based approach](#) adopted by the Province of British Columbia. The engagement approach respects and acknowledges the unique cultures, histories, rights, laws, and governments of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. To that end, the City will continue to work with K'ómoks First Nation to ensure that their land rights are met, and that K'ómoks First Nation and Indigenous cultures are represented and celebrated, while also ensuring that newcomers, settlers, and members of the Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous communities feel welcome and can celebrate their unique cultures.

City staff and elected officials met with K'ómoks First Nation Elected Chief and Council and will continue to engage with K'ómoks First Nation, Métis Association, and and Urban Indigenous serving organizations throughout the Strategic Plan development and implementation.

Engagement with Indigenous groups included feedback from MIKI'SIW Métis Association, an Indigenous Elder involved in the Walk with Me project, and a member of the Wachiy Friendship Centre Society. Staff endeavor to continue building relationships and seeking feedback on the Strategic Cultural Plan from Indigenous groups and community members. It is significant to note that 17% of the survey responses were from respondents who identified as Indigenous peoples.

Community Engagement Activities

The project sought to ensure that a diverse and representative range of voices were heard. A detailed report on engagement activities and findings can be found in the What We Heard Report attached in Appendix A.

Community engagement research for the Strategic Cultural Plan was extensive and sought to engage in a variety of ways and to reach a diverse group of residents. To summarize, the figure below graphically presents the various community engagement activities.

Figure 4. Engagement activities at a glance



3.3.2 Key Insights from What We Heard

The engagement process gathered the community’s participation and perception regarding arts and culture in Courtenay, identifying needs and gaps relating to cultural services and facilities. A detailed "What We Heard" report was completed providing further information on the results of the community engagement (Appendix A).

The engagement process generated key findings highlighted below:

Survey Highlights

The survey was completed by ~700 participants – a sample size of approximately 2.8% of Courtenay’s population of approximately 28,420 residents.¹⁶ See Appendix A for full survey findings in the What We Heard Report.

¹⁶ Statistics Canada. City of Courtenay Census Profile 2021. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&SearchText=courtenay&DGUIDlist=2021A00055926010&GENDERlist=1&STATISTIClist=1&HEADERlist=0>

- The overall survey results show that a very **high number of respondents are culturally engaged (94%)**. Performing arts (such as theatre, dance, and music) are the most popular way to engage.
- Arts and culture in Courtenay encourage **social participation** and a sense of belonging.
- **The main barriers to accessing culture** in Courtenay are limited options nearby (29%), limited options of interest (21%), and not having enough time (20%). However, nearly a quarter of all participants stated that they do not experience any barriers.
- **Critical needs**, according to culture sector respondents (artists and cultural sector workers), are more space for performance/exhibitions (identified as a challenge by 45% of sector respondents), more rehearsal and creation space (36%), and supportive bylaws and policies for arts and culture (32%).
- **The future arts and culture offerings respondents would most like to see** more include live performances (selected by 44% of total participants), more education, programming, and workshops (29%), and more Indigenous arts and culture (28%).
- **The main cultural themes that the City should prioritize in the Culture Plan**, according to all survey participants, are enhancing space for arts and culture (35% of participants selected this option) and using arts and culture to enhance community wellbeing (26%).
- **Expenditure:** The average amount spent in the community before and after a cultural event is \$105 per individual.

Cultural Sector Findings

These findings draw on discussions at a cultural sector roundtable event hosted on May 9th, 2023, one-to-one interviews with artists and members of Courtenay’s cultural community, and discussions at a public event on July 13th, 2023.

Courtenay’s cultural sector has a collaborative spirit and is supported by numerous arts and culture organizations, volunteers, and cultural facilities. While the cultural sector offers rich and vibrant arts and cultural offerings, certain needs have been identified by the sector, including:

- **More equipped and accessible cultural spaces and performance venues** (e.g., with different sizes for different audiences and art forms). Specific types of space needs identified include a studio theatre, multi-use or adaptive spaces, and outdoor venues equipped for performances. Other space needs identified include:
 - **Greater access to City-owned spaces for rentals with discounted pricing for small community groups** – i.e., the cost of spaces was identified as a barrier for small and medium-sized local arts organizations.
 - **To conduct an accessibility audit of City-owned facilities and upgrade facilities where accessibility is an issue** for groups such as seniors (e.g., provide grab bars in washrooms, stage upgrades for performances).
 - For the **City to provide support** in setting up spaces (including outdoor) for events.

- **More funding (i.e., community grants) to help subsidize cultural events and programs.** The cost of some events/programs remains too high for sections of the population including seniors, newcomers, youth, and the unhoused. Cultural organizations are also under financial pressure and unable to meet all participation costs, hindering the sector from offering more inclusive programming.
- **A need for regional support through the development of cultural facilities/spaces, and funding programs** to support arts and cultural organizations within the region including those based in Courtenay (e.g., it was noted that other residents in the region benefit from Courtenay's cultural offerings).
- **To review transportation options to cultural events.** Transit is often a barrier for seniors, newcomers, youth, and unhoused community members.
- **The need for the City to play a coordinating role** in facilitating event schedules across cultural service providers and to maintain an event calendar.
- **To foster relationships between the cultural sector and the community** including the school district.
- **Succession planning protocols for local arts and cultural organizations.** For example, internships and mentorships for youth could enhance their interest in working within the arts and culture sector.
- **More technical and professional cultural workers** to support programming and events in Courtenay. Partnerships with educational providers including the school district and North Island College (NIC) could be beneficial, for example, to encourage more young people to work in the sector and to offer technical courses in sound and lighting, crowd control & management, arts administration and event management among others.

It must be noted that throughout Canada, and across most forms, insufficient funding remains a consistent challenge for the arts and culture sector. Particularly, art forms for which there is some form of admission charges, the financial challenges are severe. A combination of "pandemic hesitancy", costs rising faster than inflation, and flatline government budgets amid increased demands to support new voices, remain a critical part of the context in funding of arts and culture today. Courtenay's cultural organizations are facing similar challenges with funding flatlining despite inflation pressures and increasing demands (usage and population). It is important to note that new sources of revenue (such as some form of arts tax credits or social finance), and new forms of collaboration to support important cost saving or revenue enhancing initiatives, will be required to trigger new initiatives towards resolving this problem and continuing to support the positive economic and social impact of arts and culture in our communities.

Community-Identified Priority Needs

The following priority needs were identified based on collective findings from all engagement activities across all individual and community group consultations.



Engaging K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous communities

- Many participants want to see **more Indigenous arts and culture in public spaces** – e.g., for storytelling and educational opportunities, especially to raise awareness of K'ómoks' ongoing culture and heritage.
- The City of Courtenay is currently in the process of **engaging with K'ómoks First Nation** Chief and Council regarding the development of the Strategic Cultural Plan. The City is committed to working collaboratively with K'ómoks First Nation to ensure the plan is representative of Indigenous values and supportive of work towards reconciliation.
- Part of the engagement with K'ómoks First Nation will be identifying and defining what 'culture' means in Courtenay, given that it is situated on the traditional Unceded territory of K'ómoks First Nation.



More cultural spaces, and better availability and affordability

- Participants expressed the **need for more equipped and accessible cultural spaces and performance venues** to meet various sector needs, including the need for rental space. The types of spaces needed include small, medium, and larger venues, including live performance and rehearsal venues, creation venues and spaces for multi-disciplinary programming.



Developing more diverse and affordable cultural programming

- There is a desire for more **diverse and affordable cultural programming**, both in terms of services delivered by the City and by local arts and cultural groups.



Further promotion of community partnerships and collaboration

- There is a need for more community collaborations and partnerships. There is also a need to have **avenues for knowledge sharing** across the sector, for example through regular gatherings.



Increased support – financial and non-financial, local, and regional

- There is a desire for increased City financial support for arts and culture, especially community grants.
- Participants further expressed the **need for regional funding support for arts and culture in Courtenay**, given cultural offerings are beneficial or serve the wider population in the Comox Valley or region.



Further development of cultural tourism

- Participants expressed the need to leverage events such as gallery exhibitions and festivals to help make Courtenay the **cultural hub of the region** and to **promote cultural tourism**.



Attraction and training of technical cultural workers

- There is a need for more **technical expertise on how to host live performances and events** – i.e., more sound and lighting technicians, stage management and crowd control specialists are in high demand.



Development of a Public Art Policy

- There is a desire for Courtenay to develop a **Public Art Policy** that is reviewed periodically to support public arts in the city. Individuals noted such a policy could **leverage the talent of young artists** and other Equity Priority artists while involving them in community public art initiatives.

Community-check in on Strategic Goals and Objectives

A short community check-in survey was deployed from November 10th to 30th, 2023, receiving 78 responses. The purpose of the survey was to share findings from the “What We Heard Report” and gain feedback from community members on the draft strategic directions for the Plan. The survey also sought to gain feedback on developing a vision statement. A variety of quantitative and qualitative feedback was received. **Overall, there was community support for the strategic goals and objectives presented at the check-in.** Key takeaways from the results include:

- 71% of survey respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the proposed vision statement.
- 71% of survey respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the direction to ‘Advance truth and reconciliation through arts and culture.’
 - Respondents acknowledge with this direction that arts and culture initiatives encompass diverse cultures within the community and recognize that collaboration with Indigenous peoples is key to supporting and integrating Indigenous cultures as desired by Indigenous communities.
- 71% of survey respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the direction to ‘Build community resilience by strengthening arts and culture’s innate value.’
 - Respondents see arts and culture at the heart of Courtenay’s identity, and with appropriate investment there can be increased capacity for the community to pursue opportunities.
- 85% of survey respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the direction to ‘Develop more accessible cultural spaces.’

- Respondents highlighted with this direction that cost and affordability are significant barriers for both community arts groups and the public to access cultural spaces. It was also noted that the community has outgrown existing cultural spaces such as the Sid William Theatre and Filberg Centre and that the need for a larger cultural facility in the community should be explored in this direction.
- 81% of survey respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the direction to further 'Boster community arts.'
 - In this direction, respondents spoke to the specific need for the sector to build stronger relationships in the community, and that such relationships could help to further raise awareness to community arts and help alleviate space demands within the community.
- 74% of survey respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the direction to 'support the strategic development of the cultural sector.'
 - It was noted by respondents for this direction that there is a need for the City to foster closer alignment with local, regional, and national economic development initiatives that relate to arts and culture, and for the City to better support arts groups seeking funding from external sources.

The high level of agreement from survey respondents to the draft strategic directions points to how the strategic directions are well aligned to the wide range of community needs and aspirations. The feedback received guided the development of the final strategic goals, objectives, and actions.

4. Strategic Cultural Plan

4.1 Introduction

The Courtenay Strategic Cultural Plan has several components: a vision for arts and culture, strategic goals; objectives linked to each goal; and specific actions linked to each objective (Figure 6). The implementation plan – or ‘roadmap’ – will follow completion of the Cultural Strategic Plan. The purpose of the roadmap is to outline which actions need to happen and when, with key performance indicators so the City can monitor progress towards the goals.

The strategic goals are at the heart of the Strategic Cultural plan. They are the key ingredients that will guide the City on where to focus efforts to support arts and culture across the next 10 years.

Figure 6. Components of the Cultural Strategic Plan



4.2 At A Glance – Goals and Objectives

The Courtenay Vision

This Strategic Cultural Plan is inspired and guided by the Vision for Courtenay drawn from municipal strategic priorities and community consultation.

“Courtenay is a thriving cultural hub of creative opportunities, dedicated to cultivating vibrant and inclusive arts and culture for residents and visitors alike. Culture and history of Indigenous peoples, who have lived on these lands since time immemorial, are interwoven into a diverse community where connection and resiliency are celebrated through artistic expression and cultural exchange.”

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Advance truth and reconciliation through arts and culture

- Objective 1.1: Recognize the role and rights of K'ómoks First Nation Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples as it relates to arts and culture
- Objective 1.2: Respectfully acknowledge K'ómoks territory through arts and culture
- Objective 1.3: Increase support and investment in Indigenous arts and culture

Goal 2: Build community resilience through arts and culture

- Objective 2.1: Use arts and culture to support community belonging and inclusion, where differences and similarities are celebrated
- Objective 2.2: Leverage arts and culture as a medium to engage with community on complex social challenges and to support healing
- Objective 2.3: Develop cultural programming that appeals to a more diverse community

Goal 3: Develop more accessible and affordable cultural spaces

- Objective 3.1: Increase the availability of accessible and affordable spaces for arts and culture
- Objective 3.2: Prioritize initiatives/upgrades that provide enhanced and additional space for arts and culture

Goal 4: Bolster community arts

- Objective 4.1: Support the capacity building of community-led arts and culture organizations
- Objective 4.2: Break down silos and increase collaboration across the cultural sector
- Objective 4.3: Increase the awareness of community-led arts and culture events

Goal 5: Support the strategic development of the cultural sector

- Objective 5.1: Build and sustain existing social and economic impact by strengthening Courtenay's professional arts and culture sector

- Objective 5.2: Embed culture more firmly in tourism initiatives in Courtenay and the Comox Valley
- Objective 5.3: Create new and or updated policies to support the cultural sector
- Objective 5.4: Explore strategic ways to meet sector labour needs

4.3 Foundational Elements

The strategic vision for Courtenay's cultural landscape sets the stage for a dynamic and inclusive future where arts and culture play a pivotal role in community identity and resilience. To translate this vision into actionable goals, it is essential to establish the foundational elements that will guide the City's efforts in responding to the strategic plan's goals, objectives, and actions. These elements represent the core priorities that must be integrated across all cultural initiatives, ensuring that our strategy is both comprehensive and sustainable.

Advance Reconciliation Across All Initiatives

A key action for Courtenay is to weave the principles of truth and reconciliation into the fabric of every cultural effort. This means ensuring that the history, culture, and contributions of the K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples are not only acknowledged but celebrated throughout the city. This commitment to reconciliation must guide the City's actions, policies, and the way it engages with the community, making it a cornerstone of Courtenay's cultural identity.

Build the Team to Drive Cultural Change

To lead Courtenay's cultural transformation, the City must invest in building a strong, dedicated team. This involves reflecting on the findings of the benchmarking analysis and determining Courtenay's approach to resource creation that is required to drive this ambitious cultural agenda. New cultural resources will be required either internally, externally, or a blend of both and with the right people in place, Courtenay can effectively deliver on its cultural promises, ensuring that arts and culture are accessible and thriving for all.

Transform and Expand Cultural Spaces

Courtenay's cultural spaces are the heart of community life, and enhancing these facilities is a critical move. Whether it's upgrading existing venues, creating new multi-purpose spaces, or improving accessibility, these investments will ensure that the City's cultural infrastructure meets the needs of a growing and diverse population. This move is essential for fostering a sense of place and ensuring that all residents and visitors can participate in the City's cultural life.

Elevate Investment in Arts and Culture

One of the most impactful actions the City can take is to increase its financial commitment to arts and culture. By prioritizing funding and investment, Courtenay will enable its cultural sector to grow and innovate and continue to deliver on the exceptional social, economic, and tourism impacts of the sector. This move is about more than just funding projects—it's about creating a sustainable environment where funding can be leveraged to so that arts and culture can reach its full potential.

Lead Regional Cultural Advocacy

Courtenay must take a leadership role in advocating for arts and culture not just within its own boundaries, but across the Comox Valley. By championing regional collaboration and investment, and positioning Courtenay as a cultural leader, the City can attract new opportunities, enhance tourism, and strengthen its cultural sector. This move will require building strong partnerships and advocating for policies and investments that benefit the entire region and reflect the regional impact of Courtenay's arts and culture assets.

4.4 Courtenay Strategic Cultural Plan Goals, Objectives and Actions

Goal 1. Advance truth and reconciliation through arts and culture

This goal recognizes the role of arts and culture as a powerful medium in advancing truth and reconciliation in Courtenay and surrounding communities in the region. It emphasizes collaboration with the K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples in acknowledging and celebrating Indigenous history and culture of the community. It was noted that there is a lack of visibility of Indigenous arts, culture, and heritage, thus a desire to see more Indigenous arts and culture in public spaces.

This goal aligns with key objectives of Courtenay's Official Community Plan including ACH 1 which seeks to *"Incorporate art, culture and heritage, including K'ómoks First Nation heritage, into place-making efforts throughout the city, including in the design of new private and public buildings and spaces."*

Objective 1.1: Recognize the role and rights of K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples as it relates to arts and culture

Action 1.1.1: Commit to **ongoing relationship building** with K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples to allow for the **continuous shaping of the Strategic Cultural Plan** as a living document reflective of the Indigenous history of Courtenay and the region.

Action 1.1.2: Engage with K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples to **seek input, guidance, and consent** in cultural planning processes and co-designing protocols through **decolonized practices**.

Action 1.1.3: Include Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community leaders in **cultural planning processes** to ensure the incorporation of traditional wisdom.

Objective 1.2: Respectfully acknowledge K'ómoks territory through arts and culture

Action 1.2.1: Continue to **respectfully acknowledge the land**, recognizing the Unceded traditional territories of the K'ómoks First Nation, in all City-led engagement and activities. Further this through the development of the City's Reconciliation Framework, and include corporate policy to ensure K'ómoks First Nation land acknowledgment is carried out consistently across City operations.

Action 1.2.2: Explore partnerships with Indigenous communities to co-develop arts and culture-related **policies, learning opportunities, programs, events, and workshops** that foster understanding of Indigenous histories, traditions, and values.

Action 1.2.3: Support the creation of **public art installations that celebrate K'ómoks First Nation and Indigenous cultures** and reinforce the City's commitment through development of a **Public Art Policy**. These installations can serve as a visible and lasting representation of the respect and acknowledgment of the territory and should be commissioned from Indigenous artists.

Action 1.2.4: Consider **renaming the Native Sons Hall** following an appropriate process that acknowledges the harms caused by the Native Sons of Canada to a number of equity deserving groups. The process should be conducted with consent from K'ómoks First Nation as part of acknowledging the Indigenous history of Courtenay.

Objective 1.3: Increase support and investment in Indigenous arts and culture

Action 1.3.1: Consider establishing **dedicated funding and grants for Indigenous artists, cultural projects, and public art** through a City-funded Arts and Culture Grant Program.

Action 1.3.2: Investigate **financial investment** opportunities to support K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples to bolster their capacity for meaningful engagement in City Arts and Culture initiatives such as the Strategic Cultural Plan. Further this through the development of the City's Reconciliation Framework and potential Arts and Culture Grant Program.

Action 1.3.3: Support and encourage participation in **Indigenous-led cultural events and ceremonies** and explore ways to decolonize existing arts and cultural activities by integrating Indigenous arts and culture into events like Canada Day.

Action 1.3.4: Foster **collaboration with Indigenous artists and creators** by commissioning or showcasing their work and exploring facilitation of networking opportunities to connect with peers, collaborators, mentors, and buyers

Action 1.3.5: Advocate for **sustainable tourism initiatives and tourism investments** that respectfully highlight and celebrate Indigenous arts and culture in collaboration with K'ómoks First Nation, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples.

Goal 2. Build community resilience through arts and culture

Located in a beautiful geographic location, Courtenay offers a variety of cultural activities that are enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. The city is also home to strong cultural anchors who work collaboratively to support cultural activities and there is strong community support and interest in arts and culture. In addition, feedback gathered from equity priority groups (including Indigenous, Black and people of colour community members, youth, immigrants, 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals, persons with disabilities, and unhoused people), indicated that arts and culture fosters a sense of belonging and identity, community connections and healing, while offering an outlet of expression for community members. Nonetheless, it was also identified that more cultural programming and activities are needed for diverse groups, particularly for youth and other equity priority groups hence the need to specifically address the needs of these communities.

This goal supports the desire for more inclusive community programs and aligns with key objectives of Courtenay's Official Community Plan including ACH 4 which seeks to "regularly monitor and update arts and culture programs to keep pace with the needs of a range of users as the community grows", and ACH 25 that aims to "Seek new partnership models that support providing more arts and cultural opportunities throughout the city".

Objective 2.1: Use arts and culture to support community belonging and inclusion, where differences and similarities are celebrated

Action 2.1.1: Explore establishing a Cultural Coordinator position at the City as a dedicated resource for arts and culture. This role will be responsible for connecting with communities, building relationships, and ensuring that arts and culture initiatives are effectively integrated and supported throughout the City.

Action 2.1.2: Review the **City's current event and festival support**, as well as community activities, with a lens to enhance diverse cultural representation and celebrations (i.e. Complete a Special Events and Hosting Policy for the City of Courtenay).

Action 2.1.3: Explore ways to make arts and cultural events, as well as heritage offerings **more inclusive, accessible, and representative** in collaboration with community arts groups.

Action 2.1.4: Explore **collaborations with community arts groups** that serve distinct community members in creating cultural spaces and developing activities that are accessible and welcoming to everyone.

Objective 2.2: Leverage arts and culture as a medium to engage community on complex social challenges and to support healing

Action 2.2.1: Support ongoing **collaborative arts and culture projects** with local organizations that encourage dialogue, collective problem-solving, and storytelling through diverse media to address social challenges like isolation, while promoting relevant grant funding streams to support this work.

Action 2.2.2: Develop **partnerships with organizations that provide arts and culture-based wellness activities to support healing and well-being**, especially for community members affected by trauma or social disparities.

Objective 2.3: Develop cultural programming that appeals to a more diverse community

Action 2.3.1: Strengthen partnerships with equity priority groups (Indigenous, Black and people of colour, immigrants, 2SLGBTQIA+, persons with disabilities, and unhoused community members) to support or co-create inclusive programs and events, provide space for feedback on cultural sensitivity, and identify diverse programming opportunities that reflect the needs and interests of all community members

Action 2.3.2: Showcase the contributions of diverse individuals and local organizations in the cultural sector through an awards program or by integrating recognition into existing community events.

Action 2.3.3: Explore **partnerships with local groups and institutions**, such as North Island College and School District 71, to develop **youth arts and culture** programming both in schools and community, focusing on reducing barriers to participation.

Goal 3. Develop more accessible and affordable cultural spaces

Courtenay is home to several cultural facilities i.e., 29 facilities and spaces used for arts and cultural events, programming and activities that not only serve Courtenay residents, but residents from neighboring cities in the Comox Valley and visitors to the region. However, community consultations revealed that there is limited availability and affordability of suitable cultural facilities that meet the needs of individuals and local community groups i.e., there is not enough spaces to meet the growing cultural needs. Specific space needs identified include space for live performances, multi-disciplinary programming space, rehearsals, and creation spaces. Limited accessibility and awareness of existing space were also mentioned.

A Cultural Facilities Options analysis was conducted to identify specific space needs, as well as existing spaces that could potentially meet these needs (including short-term, medium-term, longer-term priorities and consideration for a future vision to build new facilities).

This goal supports the desire for more cultural spaces and aligns with key objectives of Courtenay's Official Community Plan including ACH 9 which seeks to "Recognize local cultural, arts, and heritage assets as foundational to Courtenay's community identity" ACH 11 "Consider the establishment of a dedicated community arts and culture space" and ACH 38 which seeks to "Create a Courtenay Cultural Plan, including consideration of a dedicated community arts and culture space".

Objective 3.1: Increase the availability of accessible and affordable spaces for arts and culture

Action 3.1.1: Conduct a **facility needs assessment and accessibility audit** of City-owned arts and culture spaces as the first step in developing a Cultural Facilities Plan. This assessment will consider factors like location, transportation, and potential upgrades, with the findings directly informing the plan to guide future development of cultural spaces.

Action 3.1.2: Encourage other arts and cultural spaces (non City-owned) to conduct accessibility audits of their spaces. The City can support this by communicating and promoting external grant opportunities that support facility retrofits.

Action 3.1.3: Advocate to the region for transit providers to include consideration for events and programming relating to arts and culture (i.e., car and bike usage, shuttle usage, walking and parking) in service planning.

Action 3.1.4: Consider exploring **digital platforms to host a Cultural Asset and Resource map** that communicates the inventory, availability, and pricing of cultural facilities, in partnership with a community lead agency.

Objective 3.2: Prioritize initiatives/upgrades that provide enhanced and additional space for arts and culture

Action 3.2.1: Complete **Facility Feasibility / Needs Assessments** to look at how existing City-owned arts and culture facilities can be modified to meet emerging

community needs (including for live performance, multi-disciplinary, rehearsal, and creation spaces), such as the Native Sons Hall, for arts and culture programming, with considerations for prioritization of equity priority groups and in collaboration with local organizations. (Noting consideration must be made for the impact this may have on recreation activities currently scheduled.) These efforts should be integrated into a Cultural Facilities Plan to align with the City's long-term cultural infrastructure strategy.

Action 3.2.2: Develop a **Cultural Facilities Plan** with short, medium and long term priorities, leveraging relevant feedback collected and analysis undertaken in the Strategic Cultural Plan project including the Cultural Facilities Options Analysis.

Action 3.2.3: Work with partners to **promote grant opportunities**, such as the Canada Cultural Spaces Fund, for both City and non-City-owned cultural organizations to fund renovations, specialized equipment, and feasibility studies.

Action 3.2.4: Advocate to **the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD)** regarding regional funding to support future capital arts and culture projects that demonstrate regional impact.

Action 3.2.5: Develop policy to include arts and cultural facilities and amenities as eligible to receive development related funding such as Amenity Cost Charges. These funds could be directed toward projects identified in the Cultural Facilities Plan. These tools provide a funding mechanism to ensure that the increased demand on community amenities such as arts and cultural services is accommodated as the community grows, as well as provides for street improvement amenity features that can assist in the unique feeling and community practice of place-making at the neighbourhood scale.

Goal 4. Bolster community arts

Courtenay is home to several community-led arts and cultural organizations, who prioritize participation, collaboration, and engagement within the community itself. Through community partnerships, and cultural programming, local organizations are committed to empowering local artists, enriching community spaces, and fostering meaningful connections through the arts. By amplifying the voices and talents of community members, local arts groups strive to create a dynamic cultural hub where everyone can participate, express themselves, and find inspiration. However, there is a need to further build the capacity of local organizations, increase local collaborations, and create awareness of existing arts, culture and heritage offerings in the community.

This goal aligns with key objectives of Courtenay's Official Community Plan including ACH 25 which aims to *"Seek new partnership models that support providing more arts and cultural opportunities throughout the city"*.

Objective 4.1: Support the capacity building of community-led arts and culture organizations

Action 4.1.1: Continue supporting core cultural service providers (i.e., Comox Valley Art Gallery, the Courtenay and District Museum, the Sid Williams Civic

Theatre, and the Comox Valley Community Arts Council) to ensure continuity and ability to meet their full potential as cultural anchors in the community.

Action 4.1.2: Leverage the City's relationship with Comox Valley Community Arts Council to support organizational capacity building in the sector through its **training and professional development initiatives**.

Action 4.1.3: Consider establishing a **City-funded Arts and Culture Grant Program** to support community-led events, initiatives, and organizational capacity building. This grant program would be the primary mechanism for providing financial resources to local arts organizations, community groups, and Indigenous artists.

Action 4.1.4: Explore establishing a **dedicated Cultural Coordinator role in the City** to act as a liaison for the cultural community, support capacity building, identify and act on arts and culture opportunities, lead coordination activities, and implement the Cultural Strategic Plan.

Objective 4.2: Break down silos and increase collaboration across the cultural sector

Action 4.2.1: Work with one of the core cultural service providers to organize **regular networking events, conferences, and forums that connect organizations**, facilitate knowledge sharing and collaboration, and exchange resources to strengthen community capacity throughout the region.

Action 4.2.2: Consider **fostering a relationship between the cultural sector and other local institutions** – e.g. North Island College and SD71. Such a relationship can support youth engagement in arts and culture as well as access to the use of school spaces.

Action 4.2.3: Investigate opportunities to **develop policies or incentives to encourage partnerships between local businesses (i.e. Downtown Courtenay BIA), and local artists, groups, and organizations**.

Objective 4.3: Increase the awareness of community-led arts and culture events

Action 4.3.1: Introduce an **annual Arts and Culture report to Council from core cultural service providers** that includes insights from community on their programs and services, as well as performance metrics, and reports on implementation of Strategic Cultural Plan.

Action 4.3.2: Consider **partnering with existing non-profit organizations who are curating event calendars** locally and on Vancouver Island to support promotion and increased awareness of local events.

Action 4.3.3: Consider **support for development of an awareness and marketing strategy to promote arts and culture events and offerings**, with a focus on reaching diverse groups. This strategy will also consider event promotion and collaboration with partners like the Comox Valley Community Arts Council.

Action 4.3.4: Promote and raise awareness of arts and culture by **supporting community-based arts projects supported by public art policy.**

Action 4.3.5: Consider creating an **annual or bi-annual process of updating Courtenay's Cultural Asset Map** in collaboration with Creative Coast to highlight Courtenay's cultural offerings and encourage regional collaboration.

Goal 5. Support the strategic development of the cultural sector

Courtenay is home to several arts and cultural organizations with demonstrated social and economic value of arts and culture to the community. There is also strong municipal support for core cultural partners, who provide cultural offerings to residents of the city and region, as well as visitors. However, there is a need for more support particularly for community arts and culture and at the regional level to support the city as a cultural hub in the region.

This goal prioritizes the robust support and strategic development of Courtenay's cultural sector, recognizing its profound impact on the city and region's identity and economy. Through targeted initiatives and investments, Courtenay can cultivate an environment where the arts flourish, fostering creativity, diversity, and innovation. By nurturing partnerships, creating cultural tourism opportunities and policy frameworks, Courtenay can unlock the full potential of its cultural sector, enriching the lives of residents and visitors alike while positioning the city as a vibrant cultural destination in the Comox Valley and on Vancouver Island. To achieve this strategic development goal, regional collaboration and funding support are essential.

This goal aligns with key objectives of Courtenay's Official Community Plan including ACH 8 which seeks to "*Work regionally and in partnership to coordinate arts and cultural services and invest and raise the Comox Valley's profile as a centre for contemporary artistic creation*", and ACH 10 which seeks to "*Advocate for investment in arts, culture, and heritage as a local tourism economic development driver*".

Objective 5.1: Build and sustain existing social and economic impact by strengthening Courtenay's professional arts and culture sector

Action 5.1.1: Integrate arts and culture into City's Community Economic Development Analysis and economic strategies, including fostering closer alignment with local, regional, and national economic development initiatives by collaborating with entities like the Canada Council for the Arts (CCA) and Canadian Heritage.

Action 5.1.2: Review and enhance existing funding structures to support core cultural service providers (Comox Valley Community Arts Council (CVAC), Comox Valley Art Gallery (CVAG), Sid William Theatre, and Courtenay and District Museum) by considering integrating existing funding into a dedicated stream within a City-Funded Arts and Culture Grant Program. This will ensure that these providers continue to meet the evolving needs of the community.

Action 5.1.3: Cultivate diverse collaborations with interest groups, including educational systems (e.g., North Island College, School District 71), private studios, individual arts educators, and music organizations, to build a robust network that

amplifies the sector's influence and supports arts education and Indigenous collaborations.

Action 5.1.4: Explore a **regional funding and coordination approach with Comox Valley local governments and the Comox Valley Regional District** to support arts and culture. This includes establishing regional funding for core cultural partners who provide regional services, as well as community grants and capital funding for arts and culture.

Objective 5.2: Embed arts and culture more firmly in tourism initiatives in Courtenay and the Comox Valley

Action 5.2.1: Collaborate with the Comox Valley Regional District and Experience Comox Valley to highlight cultural tourism opportunities in Courtenay, aligning with their Tourism Strategy Plan.

Action 5.2.2: Work with local organizations (e.g., Comox Valley Community Arts Council, Experience Comox Valley) to develop a **marketing and outreach strategy** for events and programs and to promote the City and Comox Valley as a cultural tourism destination. Leverage Experience Comox Valley's annual Destination Plan.

Action 5.2.3: Create a Working Group to **develop a sustainable vision and action plan for nightlife** in Courtenay and advocate for the nighttime economy, potentially leveraging the existing Comox Valley Tourism Advisory Committee or Economic Development Strategy.

Action 5.2.4: Work with Experience Comox Valley to **establish signature tourism events** during the shoulder months (outside of summer) to draw year-round visitors to Courtenay and the Comox Valley.

Objective 5.3: Create new and or updated policies to support the cultural sector

Action 5.3.1: Develop a **Special Events and Hosting Policy or Guidelines** that support arts and cultural events including those that serve as a tourism draw for Courtenay. The policy could also outline how to create accessible materials for hosting events that would be useful to community-led and grassroots event organizers. The policy should further clarify guidelines for when the City is being a host, a facilitator or a location for special events. Note, this policy should align with cultural tourism and economic development plans.

Action 5.3.2: Develop a **Public Art Policy** that supports public art and mural projects in the community. The policy would outline how to prioritize commissions for local artists, as well as support the representation of Indigenous arts and culture in the community. The policy could also help foster youth engagement in community public art initiatives.

Action 5.3.3: Consider reviewing the **City's Street Entertainer Program and the associated regulation bylaw**. Explore opportunities for leveraging the program for nightlife and community placemaking activities via collaboration with local businesses.

Action 5.3.4: Consider establishing an **arts and culture committee** for the City to advise Council and staff on priorities, activities, and initiatives related to arts and culture in Courtenay, including the implementation of the Strategic Cultural Plan and alignment with local tourism and economic development activities.

Action 5.3.5: Include arts and culture in local area planning initiatives, with specific consideration for **identifying Downtown as an arts, culture, and heritage hub or district** in line with the OCP.

Objective 5.4: Explore strategic ways to meet sector labour needs

Action 5.4.1: Consider opportunities of **working with School District 71 and local organizations to integrate arts and culture into school curricula** to foster the interest of children and youth in the arts and cultural sector.

Action 5.4.2: Support **collaborations between local organizations and educational institutions** (such as North Island College and Excel Career College) **to develop and fast-track technical and short courses related to arts and culture** including sound and lighting, stage management and crowd control related courses.

Action 5.4.3: Investigate ways the City can support local arts and culture organizations to offer **volunteer, mentorship, and co-op educational opportunities** for youth and community members who are interested in developing a career in the cultural sector.

Action 5.4.4: Support the approval of developments that provide **housing and workspaces for artisans and the cultural sector** in the community (similar to Tin Town) in the community. This initiative can draw inspiration from successful models like Montreal and Vancouver, where affordable housing contributes to vibrant artistic communities and can also attract talent to support the cultural sector.

5. Conclusion

Courtenay's Strategic Cultural Plan lays a strong foundation for fostering a vibrant and inclusive cultural landscape that reflects the community's unique identity and aspirations. The Plan is the result of extensive community engagement with individuals and arts and cultural organizations, and it sets the stage for the next decade of work and investments in the sector. By focusing on five key areas or foundational elements - advancing truth and reconciliation, building community resilience, developing more accessible and affordable cultural spaces, bolstering community arts, and supporting strategic cultural sector growth - the plan lays a strong foundation for success.

The benefits of investing in arts and culture go far beyond the costs, with significant economic, social, and tourism development spinoffs that will enhance the community. When municipalities commit funding, arts and culture groups can leverage those investments to secure additional financial resources, amplifying the impact. The economic and social benefits are quantifiable and should be considered in long term capital investment decisions required to anchor and support arts and culture activities.

Regional collaboration will also be essential to realizing the full potential of this plan. The arts and culture sector's growth and sustainability cannot be fully realized without support that extends beyond municipal boundaries. Many of the initiatives—such as the development of affordable cultural spaces, bolstering community arts, and advancing truth and reconciliation—require a coordinated effort from neighboring municipalities and regional bodies. Regional funding will play a critical role in ensuring that the broader Comox Valley continues to benefit from arts and cultural offerings, and it will provide the necessary resources to elevate the sector in the entire region. Working together at the regional level can amplify impact, create more inclusive and accessible arts experiences, and unlock the full potential of arts and culture as drivers of economic, social, and cultural development throughout the area.

The next step will be the completion of an Implementation Plan following Council's adoption of the final Strategic Cultural Plan, to bring these ideas to life. The Implementation Plan will ensure that the strategic goals are effectively integrated into the City's broader strategic agenda, solidifying Courtenay's commitment to cultural growth, enhancing the quality of life for residents and positioning the city as a hub of creativity and innovation.

6. Appendices

Appendix A. What We Heard Report [Separately attached]

Appendix B. Comparative Review [Separately attached]

Appendix C. Cultural Facilities Options [Separately attached]

Appendix D. List of Existing Facilities and Spaces

1. **Comox Valley Art Gallery**
2. **Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds**
3. **Courtenay & District Museum & Paleontology Centre**
4. **Sid Williams Theatre**
5. **Centre for the Arts**
6. **Florence Filberg Centre**
7. **Lawn Bowling Building - Bill Moore Park**
8. **Lewis Centre**
9. **Native Sons Hall**
10. **Salish Building**
11. **The Linc Youth Centre**
12. **Tsolum Building**
13. **Valley Park Clubhouse**
14. **Comox Valley Presbyterian Church (Comox)**
15. **Silver Bowerbird Gallery and Studio**
16. **Vanier Theatre**
17. **Artful: The Gallery**
18. **Courtenay Library**
19. **HMCS ALBERNI Museum and Memorial**
20. **I-Hos Gallery**
21. **Little Red Church Community Arts Centre (Comox)**
22. **Old Church Theatre**
23. **St. John The Divine Anglican Church**
24. **Stan Hagen Theatre**
25. **Courtenay Legion**
26. **Rotary Centennial Pavilion**
27. **St. George's United Church**
28. **The Spool Sewing Studio**