

Background to the Municipal Cultural Policy

Prince Edward County joins a growing number of leading municipalities in Ontario and across Canada that recognize the central role of culture in both economic prosperity and quality of life.

This Municipal Cultural Policy is shaped by this recognition and by four recent and important County planning initiatives, all bearing on culture and cultural development in the County.

In 2004, an *Economic Development Strategy* identified *four pillars* of our economy – culture, tourism, agriculture and commerce/industry. Arts, culture and heritage resources were described as significantly underdeveloped relative to their potential.

Also in 2004, *Vision 2009* invited the community to envision those characteristics of life in the County in 2009 of which they would be most proud. A consistent and powerful theme was preserving and enhancing culture and heritage, together with a healthy and vibrant arts community.

In 2005 Council adopted a *Cultural Strategic Plan*, a document now cited as a leading municipal cultural plan in Ontario. The Cultural Plan defines an overall planning framework to guide the combined efforts of the municipality and its community and business partners.

The arts, culture and heritage also figured prominently in the *Operational Review of the Department of Community Services* in 2005. The Review led to the creation of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Culture with a new mandate and additional resources.

This Municipal Cultural Policy sets out the Municipality of Prince Edward County's commitments to culture and cultural development.

Prince Edward County Municipal Cultural Policy

Vision

We are all settlers in Prince Edward County. For over 200 years, people have chosen to come to this island, to create a life for themselves and their families, and in the process to build a unique and remarkable County culture.

Our culture is a product of this beautiful place and the energy and passion of the many generations who settled here. It is the glue that connects old and new residents, our past and our future. It is where our history and creativity meet.

What We Value

We recognize and value the following defining features of County culture.

- Our unique island character, scenic shorelines, sandbanks and maritime history.
- Our proud Loyalist traditions and history.
- Our rural landscapes, family farms and proud agricultural heritage.
- Our many villages, hamlets and small town ambience.
- Our historic homes, farmsteads and heritage streetscapes.
- Our long history and renown for agriculture and food production - from barley to canning to dairy and cheese to grapes and wine.
- Our entrepreneurial spirit and capacity to renew and reinvent our economy.
- Our embracing of creative excellence and the County as home for artists of all kinds.
- Our sense of community - one that connects old and new residents.

Definitions

Consistent with the *Cultural Strategic Plan for Prince Edward County*, we understand our **cultural resources** to include:

- i. The history, traditions and stories of our community.
- ii. Architecture and built heritage
- iii. Natural and cultural landscapes
- iv. Archaeology, historic sites and landmarks
- v. Museums, archives and public libraries
- vi. Festivals and events
- vii. The talents and energies of individual artists and arts organizations
- viii. Cultural businesses such as commercial art galleries, local media, film and video, sound recording, publishing, design and fashion, local crafts.

Our Commitments

Culture is a shared responsibility among the municipality and its community and business partners. Within the Municipality, we will integrate culture across all municipal departments through:

Planning and Policy – We will take culture into account in developing and monitoring plans and policies in such areas as land use, economic development, community programs and services (including parks, recreation and culture), and public works.

Funding and Investment – With a commitment to the effective and sustainable use of County resources, we will seek to increase our investment and encourage our community and business partners to do the same.

Partnerships and Capacity Building – We will build partnerships with our community and business partners through participation in the Cultural Roundtable, the Tourism Development Alliance, and other partnership opportunities.

Communications – We will communicate the importance of culture throughout the Corporation and the community.

Program Delivery - We will strive for excellence in the delivery of cultural programs and services and in the management of County owned or operated cultural facilities.

We will report annually to the community on achievements across all these areas of responsibility.

Signed by the Mayor and Council