

NEW WESTMINSTER

ARTS

STRATEGY

2008

A Plan for the Arts in New Westminster



2010
LEGACIES
NOW


NEW WESTMINSTER

“Could we ever know each other in the slightest without the arts?”
Gabrielle Roy (1909-1983) - quoted on the back of the Canadian \$20 bill.

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*Urban Impressions.
Amelia Douglas Gallery,
Douglas College.*

1.0 Executive Summary

The Arts Strategy is the City's plan for the arts in New Westminster over the next five years. The project highlights the value that arts brings to a community and was based upon a comprehensive assessment of the strengths and the needs of the arts community. It develops desired outcomes and recommended strategies for the City and the arts community to consider when addressing the issues. It reflects the diversity of community arts and cultural groups.

Methodology

Public survey: Arts related questions were included in the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan survey that was conducted in May 2007. 755 out of 2000 surveys were completed.

Interviews: From June to October 2007, interviews were held with arts and culture groups and individuals in the community. 80 individuals participated in the interviews.

Arts Questionnaires: From June to October 2007, two on-line arts questionnaires were posted on the Parks and Recreation website, one to be completed by artists and the other to be completed by interested community members. 179 questionnaires were completed.

The Plan

The Arts Strategy identified Key Issues in six broad categories.

- Support and Leadership
- Community Arts Development
- Awareness and Promotion
- Gathering and Performance spaces
- Public Art
- Events/Festivals

Key Issues are significant, ongoing challenges, opportunities or any other potential significant occurrences that have the potential to impact the desired future. The key issues related to the arts in New Westminster were identified by members of the arts community, local residents and the Arts Strategy Taskforce and are based on identified gaps and shortcomings in arts services in New Westminster. Recommendations to address the Issues have been developed and are presented in the form of Desired Outcomes and associated Strategies to achieve the Outcomes. A list of possible Actions and Activities for the City and the arts community were identified during the consultation process, that could be considered in the implementation of each strategy.

Future Directions

FIRST STEPS

The public consultation identified the need for the City to play a leading role in the delivery of arts services in New Westminster. This is referred to as a Community Development approach where City staff work with stakeholders and community groups to support existing services and identify opportunities for coordination of resources, marketing and promotion. The public consultation process identified the fact that that the City needs to take a stronger leadership role to bring arts stakeholders together, kickstart the implementation of the strategies identified in the report and to maintain ongoing progress. One of the pivotal strategies that are identified in this report is the City hire a dedicated Arts Manager. Without this commitment, many of the desired outcomes and recommended strategies will not be attainable.

It is important that the City work with the arts community to implement the immediate Activities and Actions as outlined in Appendix 5. These early and speedy successes will assist in building the confidence of the arts community in the Arts Strategy.

*“An artistic
community is a
healthy community”.*

New Westminster
Community Arts Strategy
interview participant 2007

ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION

The City and the arts community need to ensure the strategies are implemented and the corresponding actions and activities are considered on an annual basis.

The Arts Strategy is a document that will assist the City in partnership with the arts community, stakeholders, businesses and other agencies in the community to plan for the support and further development of the arts in New Westminster.

MONITORING PROGRESS

The intention is to monitor and report results on an annual basis. Where appropriate, Actions and Activities that contribute towards the Desired Outcomes will be quantified and progress will be tracked over time. In other instances, qualitative means will be used to report on the strategic successes. The intent is also to ensure the Art Strategy is kept up-to-date and appropriate by revising it as needed. It is expected that a completely updated Arts Strategy will be required in approximately five years.



Art Council of New Westminster at Fraserfest.

“The arts are an even better barometer of what is happening in our world than the stock market or the debates in congress.”



*Avert,
Royal City Youth Ballet.*

2.0 Introduction

New Westminster has a long tradition in arts and culture with numerous community arts organizations that have been operating for decades. This is an exciting time for the City to redefine and specify its role in the arts as the arts community is very active and there are many opportunities for exciting improvements and initiatives.

Arts and culture in New Westminster include both extensive recreational arts participants and professional artists. According to the last Census, New Westminster has 11.3 artists per 1,000 persons in the labour force.¹

Planning for the arts and culture is not new to the City as in the mid 1990's it adopted an Arts and Culture Policy. The 1997 Arts and Culture Policy was developed by the City's Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and provided a framework to guide City Council on arts related matters and presented recommendations to expand arts and cultural services. A number of the recommended actions from the Arts and Culture Policy have been completed and it is now time to develop a plan that reflects the changes that have occurred over the past eleven years and reflects the current demographics and needs of the community.

An Arts Strategy for New Westminster is crucial to the ongoing development of the community, particularly as specified in the City's Strategic Plan which was adopted in 2004. An Arts Strategy can support many of the City's Strategic priorities including Economic Development & Tourism, Riverfront Development, and Neighbourhood Livability.

Arts and Culture is evolving as an area of municipal government service delivery for the City. In the past Arts and Cultural services were community-based and not connected to any municipal department. The Parks and Recreation Department has recently been assigned responsibility for overseeing the City's participation in cultural community development which includes all forms of the arts as well as heritage.

In late 2006, Council directed staff to develop an Arts Strategy for the City. A Taskforce was appointed by City Council to oversee the process and to assist the project team that consisted of Michael Sommers of SMG/Columbia Consulting Group and Parks and Recreation staff. This Arts Strategy document is the result of the planning process undertaken by the Taskforce.

Concurrent with the development of the Arts Strategy was the undertaking by the Parks and Recreation Department to update its Comprehensive Plan. The intention was to have both planning initiatives occur in parallel with the expectation of integrating the strategies and recommendations at the completion so that Arts and Culture could be further integrated into and supported by Parks and Recreation services.

*"The arts can play
a useful role in
broader issues such
as social justice,
public safety and
community revitalization
- what is sometimes
referred to as
arts-based community
development."*

Max Wyman, *The Defiant
Imagination*, 2004, p. 33.

1. *BC a Cultural Mecca - presentation by Hill Strategies, Assembly of BC Arts Councils conference in Kelowna, B.C., May 2007.*

The Project Scope

The Arts Strategy focuses primarily on local activities and programs in the arts. It is inclusive of all abilities, genders/orientations, and ages. The project is intended to represent the diversity of the various cultures in New Westminster through the arts.

The project highlights the value that arts brings to a community and was based upon a comprehensive assessment of the strengths and the needs of the arts community. It develops desired outcomes and recommended strategies for the City and the arts community to consider when addressing the issues.

For the purpose of plan development, arts and culture are defined as two separate and distinct terms.

Culture is used as the umbrella term, which includes the performing, visual, literary, and media arts; library, archives, and heritage resources; and socio-cultural activities as practiced and preserved in a community. These practices are multicultural and reflect the beliefs, experiences, and creative aspirations of a people in a specific geographic and political area.

Arts is a specific focused, element within culture and includes the visual arts (painting, print-making, drawing, sculpture, crafts, pottery/ ceramics, photography, film and video), theatre, music and song, literary arts, and dance. The arts encompass original, creative, interpretative and facsimile reproduction and distribution.

The intent and focus of the Arts Strategy project has been to establish strategies specifically related to the support and further development of the arts in New Westminster.



*Harequin,
Royal City Youth Ballet.*

"Creativity is most likely to flourish in regions where there is a free expression of ideas and a steady flow of persons from different cultures".

Howard Gardner,
In Character magazine, 2005



*Midsummer Fairies,
Shadow and Dreams
Theatre Company.*

3.0 Mission and Vision

Mission

The Mission statement for the City of New Westminster is:

"To create a prosperous city of unique neighbourhoods, proud of its heritage and diversity. In partnership with the community, the municipal corporation strives to enhance the quality of life, support sustainable development and protect the environment."³

In its work sessions the New Westminster Arts Strategy Taskforce expressed concern that the City's Mission Statement does not adequately reflect the role and the value of the arts in New Westminster. The concern was that this omission may create difficulties in gaining needed ongoing support and resources as decisions related to arts and culture are considered.

In raising this concern the Taskforce recognized that the Mission Statement is owned by the City so it does not have the authority to change it. To address this, the Taskforce recommends that City Council consider updating the Mission Statement to more fully incorporate the arts.

This point is identified later in the report as an issue with corresponding desired outcomes, strategies and actions.

Vision for the Arts in New Westminster

Under the umbrella of the City's Mission Statement, the following vision statement describes the City's aspiration for the arts in New Westminster.

The City of New Westminster is a creative and vibrant city, open and accessible to all artists and cultures, to the broadest range of creative expression, and to the most inclusive community participation and appreciation.

This Vision Statement has been recommended to City Council by the Arts Strategy Taskforce. It has been developed by building upon the equivalent statement from the City of New Westminster Arts Policy of 1997. With its substantial foundation over time, it demonstrates the continuity/ongoing nature of the view of the desired future for the arts from the past decade to the present and into the future.

*"The arts provide
provides us with
freedom of expression
and keeps us human".*

4.0 Value of the Arts

The importance of the Arts Strategy is demonstrated in the value that a vibrant arts sector brings to the community. The arts add extensively to the social fabric of our city and our lives. The arts bring significant value and benefits to our community including:

CREATION OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

- draw people into the City to generate support of local restaurants, retail businesses and hotels
- provide employment opportunities for residents
- provide opportunities for arts businesses, galleries and arts entrepreneurs
- encourage residents and visitors to spend their entertainment dollars within the City
- encourage the development of an entrepreneurial arts community

CREATION OF COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND PRIDE

- give the community a sense of identity that differentiates it from other communities
- create a sense of community where people feel welcome and feel like they belong
- bring a sense of safety to a community as positive art participation diminishes negative social behavior such as tagging and graffiti
- provide a sense of beautification, attractiveness and pride for the community and make the public realm more appealing
- free arts events provide opportunities for all residents regardless of financial status or cultural background
- bring together the diverse cultures of our City to share multicultural traditions and arts

CREATION OF COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING

- help us understand society's challenges, issues, and interactions
- used to express rituals and is an avenue to recognize diversity and to practice tolerance
- provide people with an opportunity to consider an alternate perspective
- fight ignorance and provides opportunities to creatively solve problems with out violence

ENCOURAGEMENT OF COLLABORATION

- build connections between individuals and families of all ages and backgrounds by developing relationships and friendships through the arts
- create opportunity to connect the 'fractures' in community by bringing out cooperation and caring relationships

PROVISION OF OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN NEW SKILLS

- children, youth and adults can find a personal niche in the arts that they can not find elsewhere
- performing arts provide something for everyone; writing script, producing, acting, building props, costume designing/creation, theatre management, facilitating and volunteering
- provide an even playing field amongst children, youth and adults by providing experiences that they can 'try' without having to be highly skilled

ENCOURAGEMENT OF SELF EXPRESSION

- provide people with the opportunity to evaluate their personal values
- provide an opportunity to discover the creativity that lies within ones self
- provide an awareness of self and how a person relates to the group



*Aspiring artist,
Arts Council of
New Westminster.*

*“Great art picks up
where nature ends.”*



*First Nations Grand Entry,
Canada Day, Queen's Park.*

5.0 Key Issues, Desired Outcomes, Strategies

Key Issues

Key Issues are significant, ongoing challenges, opportunities or any other potential significant occurrences that have the potential to impact the desired future. The key issues related to the arts in New Westminster were identified by members of the arts community, local residents and the Arts Strategy Taskforce through an extensive consultative process as outlined in Appendix 2. The identified issues fall into six broad categories. The issues are based on identified gaps and shortcomings in arts services in New Westminster. Recommendations to address the Issues have been developed and are presented in the form of Desired Outcomes and associated Strategies to achieve the Outcomes. The six categories are:

- Support and Leadership
- Community Arts Development
- Awareness and Promotion
- Gathering and Performance spaces
- Public Art
- Events/Festivals

Desired Outcomes

Desired Outcomes are the goals or end results that have been specified to address the key issues. The Desired Outcomes will be achieved by addressing the Actions and Activities listed in Appendix 1 for each Strategy. These results will be measurable and the results of the efforts to achieve each Outcome will be reported to City Council, the arts community, the City's residents and other stakeholder groups on an annual basis over the next five years.

Strategies

Strategies are the major approaches or directional initiatives that will be taken to address the Key Issues and arrive at the Desired Outcomes.

Actions and Activities

Appendix 1 includes a list of possible Actions and Activities for the City and the arts community to consider in the implementation of each strategy. These were identified during the consultation process.

*"The arts builds
confidence and
individuality and
creates options for
better mental health".*

Support and Leadership

KEY ISSUES

- a) The City's Mission Statement does not appropriately reflect the role and the value of the arts in New Westminster. This absence may make it difficult to gain needed support and resources as decisions related to arts and culture are considered.
- b) The Parks and Recreation Department's name does not include any reference to Arts and Culture.
- c) The need for members of City Council to support the arts more was one of the issues identified in the public consultation.
- d) The lack of support from local businesses was raised by the participants in the arts and is seen as a challenge. There is a general lack of understanding by the arts community regarding how to communicate with businesses about the value of the arts and the benefits support of the arts can bring to their businesses.
- e) The limited level of awareness by smaller arts organizations about the availability of Municipal, Provincial and Federal grants was repeatedly raised as an issue. This is further complicated by these organizations' lack of resources and capacity to access these grants and funding sources.
- f) The need to connect local school curriculum and arts programs, activities and facilities in the community was seen as an untapped opportunity. There is recognition that some Community School Coordinators focus on the arts, however this is seen as generally an individual initiative, not a coordinated approach across the school district.
- g) The lack of awareness about community programs and venues was identified as an issue.(e.g.) Douglas College
- h) The lack of clarity about City committees and commissions in relation to Arts and Culture. (e.g.) Parks and Recreation Committee, Arts and Culture Commission, Mayor's Celebration Taskforce.
- i) The need to do outreach to multicultural groups and help coordinate their participation in the arts in the city

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- The City's Mission Statement reflects the role and the value of the arts
- The City increases staff and financial resources and empowers the staff to continually move the Arts Strategy forward.
- The Parks and Recreation Department's name, vision and mission include reference to arts and culture.
- Initiatives that are designed to support the arts are regularly developed in partnership with the arts community and maintained by the City
- Arts organizations develop increased knowledge and skills to access available grants and donation opportunities
- Local businesses and other key stakeholder groups develop increased awareness of the benefits the arts can bring to their business or group
- Local teachers are aware of local arts resources and venues, incorporate community arts programs into school curriculum and access community arts facilities.
- The City clarifies the roles of the City committees and commissions that relate to arts and culture and how interface with each other.



*Ceramics at Century House,
New Westminster Parks
and Recreation.*

*"An artistic community
is a happening
community with an
uplifting spirit".*

New Westminster Community
Arts Strategy interview
participant 2007



Douglas College Choir.

STRATEGIES

- The City's Mission Statement be broadened to include reference to the arts as opposed to embedding a separate Arts Mission in the Arts Strategy.
- The City provides staff resources in the form of an Arts Manager to assist in the creation of a supportive environment for arts to flourish in New Westminster
- The Parks and Recreation Department revise its name, vision and mission to include reference to arts and culture.
- Develop and maintain an ongoing series of initiatives focused on specific aspects in support of the arts.
- Develop and maintain a program to assist arts organizations to gain knowledge and skills to identify and access government and foundation grants, sponsorship and donation opportunities.
- Develop programs to increase the awareness of the benefit of the arts among businesses and other key stakeholder groups.
- Community arts opportunities that schools can access are identified and utilized.
- The mandates of City committees and commissions that relate to arts and culture (Parks and Recreation Committee, Arts and Culture Commission, Mayor's Celebration Taskforce) are reviewed and clarity is developed regarding their respective roles and how they interface.

See Appendix I for potential Actions and Activities identified during the consultation process related to the above strategies.

*"Art attracts us only
by what it reveals of
our most secret self".*

Community Arts Development

KEY ISSUES

- a) The need to connect artists to each other and to arts organizations in New Westminster was identified in the public consultation.
- b) It was noted that due to individual arts groups' competing for limited resources, the organizations within the arts community struggle to sustain themselves and tend to be inwardly focused. There is a perceived lack of cohesion and limited partnerships within the arts community.
- c) The general lack of sharing of facilities and resources appropriate for use by the arts was identified as inefficient use of valuable arts spaces. Arts individuals, groups and organizations are continually in need of affordable and appropriate arts spaces.
- d) There are many programs, assets and talents as well as small groups of arts supporters and participants in New Westminster, but there is no coordinated approach.

DESIRED OUTCOMES:

- The City and the arts community form partnerships that enhance arts and culture in the community
- Partnerships and positive relationships are formed between arts organizations
- Existing arts and community facilities are known, are available to and are able to be accessed by the arts community

STRATEGIES:

- The City and the arts community identify their respective roles in the delivery of arts programs and services to avoid duplication and fill gaps
- Search for and pursue specific opportunities for the City to partner with arts organizations and/or the arts community overall to undertake programs or projects to enhance the arts in the community.
- Assist the arts community to develop methods for inter-organization cooperation and partnerships, particularly focused on breaking down barriers and reducing the sense of isolation.
- Connect affordable and appropriate arts spaces to groups in need (multi-cultural and performing arts).

See Appendix I for potential Actions and Activities identified during the consultation process related to the above strategies.



*Ten Lost Years,
Douglas College Theatre.*

"Art is the fabric of the community, it enriches people's lives".

New Westminster Community Arts Strategy interview participant 2007



*Century House Singers,
New Westminster Parks
and Recreation.*

Awareness and Promotion

KEY ISSUES

- a) Traditionally community art activities, programs and events are delivered primarily by not-for-profit community organizations in New Westminster. These arts organizations often have been limited in their expansion of their activities based on their mandates and their resources.
- b) Individual community arts organizations struggle to raise awareness about their group and have little opportunity or limited funds and expertise required to deliver effective promotional messages.
- c) While there are arts organizations that support and promote the arts in the community, there is no highly visible location or centralized source that public recognizes to find information about arts organizations, activities and presentations.
- d) People are often not aware of the many arts activities, programs and events until after they are over.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Community arts organizations are provided with tools that assist them in raising awareness and promoting their activities and services
- Community arts organizations develop and execute effective promotional campaigns utilizing assistance and expertise provided by the City
- Community arts organizations collaborate to achieve success with their promotions and to enhance their collective profile
- New Westminster is readily distinguished as an artistic and historic community
- Programs are developed to identify and promote the benefits generated by the arts

STRATEGIES

- Develop programs and methodologies to assist arts organizations to develop and implement effective promotional campaigns.
- Develop and maintain media connections, resources and other support systems to assist New Westminster's arts organizations and activities to effectively deliver promotional and awareness messages to the public.
- Assist the arts community to develop methods for inter-organization cooperation and partnerships, particularly as related to promotion and profile enhancement.
- Develop a branding program(s) for the City and its arts and consistently coordinate promotional efforts around this.

See Appendix I for potential Actions and Activities identified during the consultation process related to the above strategies.

The arts are inclusive".

Gathering and Performance Spaces

KEY ISSUES

- a) The lack of spaces for artists to connect and build synergistic relationships was identified during the public consultation process. There is no central place where emerging artists and students can connect with professional and experienced artists and with the public.
- b) Small arts groups and cultural groups cited the challenges they face in locating and securing affordable and appropriate meeting space. Participants in the public consultation process also identified the lack of space for large community meetings in New Westminster.
- c) Visual artists are challenged to find space to display their work in New Westminster. While there are display spaces available at Douglas College, the Arts Council, the Library and at Massey Theatre, there are often year long waiting lists.
- d) The limited number of local arts programs and opportunities for children, youth and adults was an issue that was raised in public consultation. Local residents seeking specialized arts services find they have to go outside of New Westminster to neighboring municipalities.
- e) New Westminster no longer has a commercial movie theatre. Local residents wanting to attend the cinema have to leave New Westminster for neighboring municipalities.
- f) The seating capacity of existing theatre facilities is not ideal (either too few seats or too many seats for the majority of potential uses).
- g) Current performance spaces have been the product of the efforts of individual organizations working independently based on their original mandates rather than the result of a coordinated understanding of what would best serve the community as a whole (e.g. size, location, components, operating affordability).
- h) The existing theatres are aging facilities and will require significant financial resources to maintain or improve their condition to current requirements and standards. Theatre owners may lack long term plans for the facilities.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- New Westminster has a multi- purpose Civic Cultural facility that is well used and has space for rehearsals, instruction, performances and meetings, interaction and celebration which is affordable and appropriate for community arts organizations and individuals.
- An inventory of available spaces suitable for arts activities is developed and maintained and regularly used by the arts community.
- The City works with community arts groups to identify affordable facilities or space that could be used by community arts groups and individuals
- The City in conjunction with theatre owners and stakeholders determines and acts upon the most appropriate future for theatre space and facilities.



*Alpha Ball,
New Westminster Public Library.*

"The availability and variety of cultural activity is a significant factor in the complex livability equation. A growing number of studies show that when cities promote art, cultural and heritage activities, they not only improve the quality of life for their citizens, but also attract the skilled workforce on which a vibrant economy depends."

Max Wyman, *The Defiant Imagination*, 2004, p. 37.



Massey Theatre.

Gathering and Performance Spaces

STRATEGIES

- Plan, build and operate a purpose-built cultural facility to address the need for space for rehearsals, instruction, performances and meetings, celebrations, and visual arts.
- Develop and maintain an inventory of available spaces suitable for arts activities in a form readily accessible by the arts community and multi-cultural groups.
- In cooperation with the Vagabond Players, the current tenants of the Bernie Legge Theatre in Queen's Park, the City explores the possibility of utilizing this space, as the City's 'small' theatre facility for a wider group of users.
- Pursue initiatives to increase access to existing, affordable and appropriate spaces suitable for the arts and identify creative uses of existing space.
- Determine the most desirable and need-related types of theatre performance spaces for the community, including seating capacity, location, features, flexibility of use, operating affordability and include the feasibility of a multi-purpose arts facility. As part of this strategy, in conjunction with the owners and stakeholders, determine the future roles and business cases for Massey Theatre and the Burr Theatre with physical enhancements and fresh management and programming models.

See Appendix I for potential Actions and Activities identified during the consultation process related to the above strategies.

"Those communities that are richest in their artistic traditions are also those that are most progressive in their economic performance and most resilient and secure in their economic structure."

Public Art

KEY ISSUES

- a) The City does not have rationale to support the placement of art in public places, or a framework to encourage and guide the processes leading to the placement of public art.
- b) The public does not have an opportunity to provide input in the selection of the artists and art media or the allocation of funds designated for public art.
- c) The City does not have a funding strategy to support the purchase and installation of public art.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- The City develops and implements a Public Art Policy, supporting guidelines and a funding strategy that leads to New Westminster becoming a place noted for arts locally, regionally and nationally.
- Residents and business owners have input into funding, artistic quality and medium and artist selection.

STRATEGIES

- Develop and implement a Public Art Policy for the City that ensures public involvement.
- Develop required supporting by-laws, regulations and guidelines to support the Public Art Policy.
- Develop a funding strategy including amenities and endowments to support the creation, installation and ongoing maintenance of art in the public realm.

See Appendix I for potential Actions and Activities identified during the consultation process related to the above strategies.



New Westminster Symphony Orchestra.

"The every changing history of the world is demonstrated through the arts".

New Westminster Community Arts Strategy interview participant 2007



*Hume Park Gallery Night.
Arts Council of
New Westminster.*

Events/Festivals

KEY ISSUES

- a) While New Westminster is rich with events and festivals that include: Hyack Festival, Multicultural Festival, Arts in the Park, Yam Jam, Ragtime Fest on 12th Street, Sapperton Days, Urban Farmers Fall Fair, Santa Claus Parade, Easter in the Park, Antique Car Parade, May Day, Canada Day, Show and Shine; there are some missed opportunities to highlight, enhance or include the arts in the existing festivals.
- b) Street artists bring a sense of vibrancy and creativity to the community but New Westminster lacks this type of activity in the downtown core and in its various neighbourhoods throughout the summer months.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Arts and community organizations are supported by the City to ensure that community events and festivals remain viable, contemporary and affordable.
- Neighbourhood community events and festivals compliment each other.
- Event and festival organizers work with the City to develop multi-year plans and funding strategies to continually improve events.
- Street artists are visible and plentiful throughout the business neighbourhoods in the spring and summer months.
- Participation in festivals is encouraged and actively promoted for all New Westminster artists and arts organizations through calls for participation/ submission with clear curatorial processes in place.

STRATEGIES

- Organizations annually evaluate the status of festivals and events in New Westminster to ensure they remain viable and complimentary and are assisted to identify and address challenges.
- While conducting the annual festival/event review search for opportunities for additions and enhancements or for areas where corrective or supportive actions may be required to maintain a healthy event and festival environment.
- Identify sources of assistance, support and leadership for community events and festivals and ensure resources are coordinated and maximized.
- Develop required structures to accommodate street artists performing in business neighbourhoods in the spring and summer months.

"The arts are the best way to work with each other because the end is unknown".

Appendix 1

Actions and Activities

These potential Actions and Activities were identified during the public consultation phase of the Arts Strategy. They are options that the City and the arts community could consider in the implementation of the Strategies to achieve the Desired Outcomes. These Actions and Activities are intended to be used as a guide to work towards the Vision for the Arts in New Westminster.



Rouge Reflective
mixed media 16" x 20" ● sold

*Susie Gilmour,
Plasket Gallery,
Massey Theatre.*

"A growing body of research indicates that successful cities are creative centres, where the arts and culture flourish".



*Family Fusion,
Queensborough
Community Centre.*

Support and Leadership

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- The City's Mission Statement reflects the role and the value of the arts.
- The City increases staff and financial resources and empowers the staff to continually move the Arts Strategy forward.
- The Parks and Recreation Department's name, vision and mission include reference to arts and culture.
- Initiatives that are designed to support the arts are regularly developed in partnership with the arts community and maintained by the City.
- Arts organizations develop increased knowledge and skills to access available grants and donation opportunities.
- Local businesses and other key stakeholder groups develop increased awareness of the benefits the arts can bring to their business or group.
- Local teachers are aware of local arts resources and venues, incorporate community arts programs into school curriculum and access community arts facilities.
- The City clarifies the roles of the City committees and commissions that relate to arts and culture and how interface with each other.

STRATEGY

The City's Mission Statement be broadened to include reference to the arts as opposed to embedding a separate Arts Mission in the Arts Strategy.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

1. City Council considers updating the Mission Statement to incorporate Arts and Culture. This would mean that there would be four pillars to the City's Mission - *Social* - neighbourhoods/quality of life/diversity; *Economical* - sustainable development; *Environmental* - protect the environment / sustainable development; and *Cultural* - arts, heritage, sports and recreation.

STRATEGY

The City provide staff resources in the form of a dedicated full time Arts Manager to assist in the creation of a supportive environment for arts to flourish in New Westminster.

Actions or activities by the City within this strategy could include:

2. The City dedicate resources for a full time Arts Manager who could work with the arts community, provide guidance and leadership and has the authority within the City structure to move the Arts Strategy forward.
3. The dedicated full time Arts Manager develop incentives and opportunities to encourage working partnerships in the arts between artists, community groups, businesses, schools, municipal departments, and other agencies and organization.

STRATEGY

The Parks and Recreation Department revise its name, vision and mission to include reference to arts and culture.

Actions or activities by the City within this strategy could include:

4. The Parks and Recreation Department change the department name and revises its vision and mission to include reference to Arts and Culture to demonstrate the importance of the arts.

*The arts allow people
to take risks, try new
things and be exposed
to a world they are
not familiar with".*

STRATEGY

Develop and maintain an ongoing series of initiatives focused on specific aspects of support for the arts.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

5. Steps be taken by the City to attract young, progressive thinking people to work along side people with history and experience with the City to ensure succession planning for the Arts and Culture Commission.

STRATEGY

Develop and maintain a program to assist arts organizations to gain knowledge and skills to identify and access government and foundation grants, sponsorship and donation opportunities.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

6. A dedicated Arts Manager employed by the City research grants that are available to community arts organizations and work with the arts community to provide guidance and assistance to access the grants.
7. The City continue to provide funding to local arts and cultural groups through the Arts and Culture Endowment grant program and increase funding to address the needs of the community arts groups.
8. A dedicated Arts Manager employed by the City work with the arts groups to structure sponsorship packages that could be marketed to business and service groups.

STRATEGY

Develop programs to increase the awareness of the benefit of the arts among businesses and other key stakeholder groups

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

9. Businesses be supplied with information about the value the arts can bring to their businesses and they be encouraged to be more financially and visibly supportive of the arts.
10. The City explore and provide incentive for businesses, service and other groups to donate to the arts.
11. Existing community events and festivals be encouraged to incorporate a higher profile arts component (Hyack Festival, neighbourhood festivals).

STRATEGY

Community arts opportunities that schools can access are identified and utilized.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

12. City staff liaise with School District staff and the community to identify arts opportunities in the community that schools can access.

STRATEGY

Mandates of City committees and commissions that relate to Arts and Culture are reviewed and clarity is developed regarding their respective roles and how they interface.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

13. City Council and senior staff review the mandates of the City committees and commissions that relate to Arts and Culture. (ie. Parks and Recreation Committee, Arts and Culture Commission and determine their respective roles).
14. The City's Arts and Cultural Commission mandate and membership be reviewed to ensure there is a balance of all arts sectors and cultures within the community.



Public Art - Street Banner Project, Queensborough.

"Art is a process. Art is a form of inquiry. Art is a mode of problem-solving. Art is a community activity. If the arts are going to be more than window dressing ..., then we need to think much more broadly and systematically about the process of art, rather than just its end-products"."

Ann Daly, commenting on 2005 meeting of Americans for the Arts, Austin, TX



Children in Performing Arts,
Queensborough
Community Centre.

Community Arts Development

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- The City and the arts community form partnerships that enhance arts and culture in the community
- Partnerships and positive relationships are formed between arts organizations
- Existing arts and community facilities are known, are available to and are accessed by the arts community

STRATEGY

The City and the arts community identify their respective roles in the delivery of arts programs and services to avoid duplication and fill gaps.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

15. The City and the community arts organizations define their respective roles in the delivery of specific arts programs and festivals as well as their roles in the delivery of services overall.

STRATEGY

Search for and pursue specific opportunities for the City to partner with arts organizations or the arts community overall to undertake programs or projects to enhance the arts in the community.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

16. Focus on successes and provide incentives for arts facilities to expand sharing of spaces and resources (e.g. Douglas College, private studios).
17. The City work with the arts community to enhance existing events and activities by offering them in different locations (e.g. Senior's Festival at Douglas College).
18. The City work with the arts community to host meetings, sessions or socials to exchange ideas among arts individuals and groups.

STRATEGY

Assist the arts community to develop methods for inter-organization cooperation and partnerships, particularly focused on breaking down barriers and reducing the sense of isolation.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

19. The City create opportunities for art groups & cultural groups to know each other, build relationships and to work together.
20. The City assist the arts community to develop opportunities to coordinate arts programs and services, systems, resources, facilities and existing events.

STRATEGY

Connect affordable and appropriate arts spaces to groups in need (multi-cultural and performing arts).

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

21. Identify affordable and appropriate arts spaces for groups and individuals that do not have designated spaces and assist them to access the spaces (e.g. multi-cultural groups).

*"Where words fail,
music speaks."*

Awareness/Promotion

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Community arts organizations are provided with tools that assist them in raising awareness and promoting their activities and services.
- Community arts organizations develop and execute effective promotional campaigns utilizing assistance and expertise provided by the City.
- Community arts organizations collaborate to achieve success with their promotions and to enhance their collective profile.
- New Westminster is readily distinguished as an artistic and historic community.
- Programs are developed to identify and promote the benefits generated by the arts.

STRATEGY

Develop programs and methodologies to make available to arts organizations assistance and the expertise required to develop and execute effective promotional campaigns.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

22. The City dedicate staff resources and expertise to work with the arts community and provide guidance and leadership while at the same time developing systems and processes to support the arts.
23. The City work with the arts community to coordinate promotional literature among organizations such as a common web site or web links.
24. The City works with the arts community to develop a cross marketing arts membership idea - (e.g. join and receive a passport that discounts other arts businesses and restaurants).

STRATEGY

Develop and maintain media connections, resources and other support systems to assist New Westminster's arts organizations and activities to effectively deliver promotional and awareness messages to the public.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

25. The City's and the Parks and Recreation web pages include a section dedicated to the arts.
26. The City replaces the static read-a-board with an electronic message board in Queen's Park at the corner of McBride Blvd. and Sixth Avenue.
27. City Councilors report on arts festivals and events they are planning to attend as well as their current practice of reporting where they have been, during their weekly televised Council reports or a portion of each City Council meeting be dedicated to highlighting or showcasing upcoming events in the City.

STRATEGY

Assist the arts community to develop methods for inter-organization cooperation and partnerships, particularly as related to promotion and profile enhancement.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

28. Local businesses be approached to partner with the arts community by sponsoring an arts section in the newspaper.
29. Approach Tourism New Westminster to advertise local arts events and opportunities to the outside community.
30. The arts community, with the assistance of the City, identifies and develops opportunities where cooperative promotional efforts could lead to efficiencies in arts organizations.



Public Art - Carving,
Queensborough Middle School.

"One can endlessly cite statistics to prove employment, economic impact and tourist magnetism. What the arts-given a chance-bring to a city is something in addition to all these material rewards. They give a great city an image of its soul."

Tom Hendry, Playwright, Arts Policy Advisor and Officer of the Order of Canada



*Public Arts - Carving,
Queensborough Middle School.*

STRATEGY

Develop a branding program(s) for the City and its arts and consistently coordinate promotional efforts around this.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

31. The City uses its 'historic aspect' or its 'sense of community pride' in its efforts to artistically brand the City in its attempt to be distinctive in Metro Vancouver.

*"Those communities
that are richest in their
artistic traditions are
also those that are most
progressive in their
economic performance
and most resilient and
secure in their
economic structure."*

Gathering and Performance Spaces

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- New Westminster has a multi- purpose Civic Cultural facility that is well used and has space for rehearsals, instruction, performances and meetings, interaction and celebration which is affordable and appropriate for community arts organizations and individuals.
- An inventory of available spaces suitable for arts activities is developed and maintained and regularly used by the arts community.
- The City works with community arts groups to identify affordable facilities or space that could be used by community arts groups and individuals.
- The City in conjunction with theatre owners and stakeholders determines and acts upon the most appropriate future for theatre space and facilities.

STRATEGY

Plan, build and operate a purpose-built cultural facility to address the need for space for rehearsals, instruction, performances and meetings, celebrations, and visual arts.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

32. The City make a commitment to work with the arts community to build or convert existing space for an arts facility to house a theatre (300-600 seats), breakout rooms for rehearsals, banquet or catering facilities, multi-use rooms, purpose built rooms (dance studios, music studios, media studios with cutting edge technology), small and large spaces for up to 500 people to gather; display spaces for art (gallery) and spaces for literary arts and visual arts (e.g. painting, pottery/ceramics, woodworking, photography). Create working spaces where people can watch artists in progress.
33. Consider building the above arts facility in conjunction with other facilities as this assists with operating efficiencies.

STRATEGY

Develop and maintain an inventory of available spaces suitable for arts activities in a form readily accessible by the arts community and multi-cultural groups.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

34. The City work with the arts community and multicultural groups to complete an arts space inventory and develop greater understanding of the specialized facilities needs of art forms.

STRATEGY

In cooperation with the Vagabond Players, the current tenants of the Bernie Legge Theatre in Queen's Park, the City explores the possibility of utilizing this space, as the City's 'small' theatre facility for a wider group of users.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

35. The Bernie Legge Theatre, which is a City owned facility recently underwent renovations and upgrading. Maintain the Theatre as the City's 'small' theatre facility and in cooperation with Vagabond Players, explore options to extend its use to the broader community.

STRATEGY

Pursue initiatives to increase access to existing, affordable and appropriate spaces suitable for the arts and identify creative uses of existing space.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

36. The City work with the arts community to explore the possibility of utilizing existing spaces in community centres, school drama rooms / classrooms, stages and community theatres for other arts groups to rehearse, construct sets or perform.
37. The City encourages developers to provide funding for the arts so that dedicated art spaces, amenities and endowments are made available.



*Renevations,
Vagabond Players,
Bernie Legge Theatre.*

"If you want a city that will be remembered long after you are gone, make the arts an integral part of the long-term strategic plan for growth."

Winton M. Blount,
Former Chairman,
Blount International, Inc.



*Waltz of the Flowers,
Royal City Youth Ballet.*

STRATEGY

Determine the most desirable and need-related types of theatre performance spaces for the community, including seating capacity, location, features, flexibility of use, operating affordability and include the feasibility of a multi-purpose arts facility. As part of this strategy, in conjunction with the owners and stakeholders, determine the future roles and business cases for Massey Theatre and the Burr Theatre with physical enhancements and fresh management and programming models.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

38. The City retain a theatre consultant to meet with the owners and operators of each of the theatres in New Westminster; Massey Theatre, Bernie Legge Theatre, Burr Theatre, Douglas College Theatre and the Justice Institute and New Westminster Performing Arts groups to determine their mandate and community arts initiatives.

*"The arts improve
emotional and cognitive
development and are a
good source of exercise
such as dance".*

Public Art

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- The City develops and implements a Public Art Policy, supporting guidelines and a funding strategy that leads to New Westminster becoming a place noted for arts locally, regionally and nationally.
- Residents and business owners have input into funding, artistic quality and medium and artist selection.

STRATEGY

Develop and implement a Public Art Policy for the City that ensures public involvement.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

39. The City research and develop a Public Art Policy that includes a community development component to guarantee citizen involvement.
40. The City make a commitment to include public art inside and outside its civic facilities and parks and in street and neighbourhood beautification projects when possible.
41. The City in partnership with the arts community create community public art projects (similar to the carving project in Queensborough Middle School).

STRATEGY

Develop required supporting by-laws, regulations and guidelines to support the Public Art Policy.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

42. The City research and develop a Public Art Policy including supporting by-laws, regulations and guidelines to address public art planning, acquisition/procurement, placement, and ongoing maintenance.

STRATEGY

Develop a funding strategy to support the creation, installation and ongoing maintenance of art in the public realm.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

43. The City research other communities in Canada to determine level of funding needed to develop and maintain a successful public art program.
44. The City develop mechanisms to encourage developers to include public art in their development and to contribute development amenity contributions towards public art.



*Public Art -Carving,
Queensborough Middle School.
Edna Anderson, Poet Laureate
Emeritus.*

*"The vitality of a city
is not measured in
its commerce, but
in its art".*



*Oliver,
Royal City musical Theatre.*

Events/Festivals

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Arts and community organizations are supported by the City to ensure that community events and festivals remain viable, contemporary and affordable.
- Neighbourhood community events and festivals compliment each other
- Event and festival organizers work with the City to develop multi-year plans and funding strategies to continually improve events.
- Street artists are visible and plentiful throughout the business neighbourhoods in the spring and summer months.
- Participation in festivals is encouraged and actively promoted for all New Westminster artists and arts organizations through calls for participation / submission with clear curatorial processes in place.

STRATEGY

Organizations annually evaluate the status of festivals and events in New Westminster to ensure they remain viable, complimentary and are assisted to identify and address challenges.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

45. The City, through its annual grant programs, encourage or assist festivals and events to conduct post event reviews and embark upon enhancement programs for the next season.

STRATEGY

While conducting the annual festival/event review search for opportunities for additions and enhancements or for areas where corrective or supportive actions may be required to maintain a healthy event and festival environment.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

46. The City in partnership with the arts community and festival association and planning groups(e.g. Hyack, neighbourhood groups, BIA, Arts Council, Arts group and facilities / venues) host an arts focus festival geared to adults (a comedy festival, or a jazz festival).
47. The City in partnership with the arts community explore the possibility of replacing existing events that are no longer as viable as they once were to events which could include Big Christmas Festival in Queen's Park; Arts Festival at Columbia Street; Lantern Festival.
48. Encourage inclusion of art at all new community events (e.g.) Farmer's Market.

STRATEGY

Identify sources of assistance and support for community events and festivals and ensure resources are coordinated and maximized.

Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

49. The City in partnership with the arts community and festival association and planning groups identify and coordinate potential funding and supporting sources and opportunities so that resources can be share and coordinated.

STRATEGY

Develop required structures to accommodate street artists performing in business neighbourhoods in the spring and summer months.

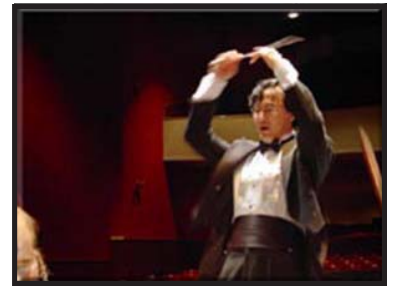
Actions or activities within this strategy could include:

50. The City develop required supporting by-laws, regulations, guidelines and funding structures to support street artists performing in business neighbourhoods in the spring and summer months.

"The arts is not competitive, it brings out cooperation and caring relationships".

Appendix 2

Arts Strategy Development Methodology



*New Westminster
Symphony Orchestra.*

"The arts bring people together and people develop relationships and friendships through the arts".

New Westminster Community
Arts Strategy interview
participant 2007



*Reindeer and Baby Mouse,
Royal City Youth Ballet.*

Arts Strategy Development Methodology

ARTS STRATEGY TASKFORCE

In January 2007, City Council appointed an Arts Strategy Taskforce. The Taskforce consisted of the project team, a City Councillor and community members. The project team consisted of two staff (Joanne Edey-Nicoll, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation and Renee Chadwick, Manager of Queensborough Community Centre) and a consultant (Michael Sommers, SMG/Columbia Consulting Group). City Council selected one Council member, Councillor Bob Osterman and twelve community representatives as taskforce members.

They are:

Andree St. Martin, Chelsea McPeake, Debra McKenzie, Evelyn Benson, Felicia Costea, Lorna McCallum, Maria Pidgorna, Richard Carswell, Sukhninder S. Sangha, Trudy Van Dop, Victor Villamera and Jessica Schneider.

The role of the taskforce was to represent the community and provide input to the project team in the development of the Arts Strategy. Specifically the taskforce was to:

- Develop selection criteria for organizations and individuals to be interviewed
- Recommend groups to be included in the consultation
- Monitor progress of the project to ensure that it continues to move forward
- Regularly report back to Council and the Arts and Culture Commission on progress
- Provide input and guidance to the project team as appropriate
- Make recommendations to City Council.

THE APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARTS STRATEGY

A two-phased process was utilized to develop the Arts Strategy. The first phase consisted of a Situation Assessment or community consultation to develop the information base upon which an effective arts strategy could be built. It took stock of the local arts situation and identified the gaps and needs to be addressed. The second phase consisted of the strategic decision-making which built upon the Situation Assessment information base to develop a strategic plan for the arts in New Westminster.

The development approach was fact-based and issues-driven. That is, rather than basing the strategy on the opinions and experience of a small number of individuals, during the Situation Assessment it conducted very extensive quantitative and qualitative information gathering to ensure that the Arts Strategy was built on a solid, defensible foundation of factual information.

The process was carefully analyzed to identify the strategic issues to be dealt with. Strategic Issues are significant, ongoing problems, opportunities or any other important potential occurrences that have the potential to impact the desired future. The strategic decisions (the strategies) have been specifically focused on what is required to address the identified issues.

The information gathering process consisted of conducting interviews, questionnaire surveys and review of existing documentation.

“When you come right down to it, the arts are what really count in any culture. Any history of humankind will be basically a review of art and cultural activities.”

*Robert M. Bateman, noted
Canadian wildlife artist*

INTERVIEWS WITH ARTS INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

The Arts Strategy Taskforce identified individual artists and arts groups to be interviewed. Interviews were conducted by Mike Sommers-SMG/Columbia Consulting Group, Warren Sommer - PERC Consultants, Joanne Edey-Nicoll, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation and Renee Chadwick, Manager, Queensborough Community Centre. Each interview was carried out by two interviewers, one to conduct the interview and the other to take notes. Additionally, each interview was audio taped to ensure accuracy of information. Arts Strategy interview participants were assured that the information they supplied would be kept in confidence and individual sources would not be identified. A total of 80 individuals participated in the interview process between June and October 2007. The groups represented included:

- Arts Council Board of Directors
- Arts and Culture Commission
- Arts Strategy Taskforce
- Arts-Related Education - School District 40 and Douglas College
- Arts-Related Businesses
- Dance Studios
- Events and Festivals
- Literary Arts
- Massey Theatre
- Musical Groups
- Parks & Recreation Programmers/Managers
- Royal City Musical Theatre
- Royal City Youth Ballet
- School District #40 Arts Staff
- School District #40 Administrative Staff
- Theatre Groups - Facility
- Theatre Groups - Performance
- Vagabond Players

SURVEY SENT TO A RANDOM SAMPLE OF HOUSEHOLDS

The Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan was conducted at the same time as the Community Arts Strategy was being developed. As part of the consultation for the Comprehensive Master Plan, a survey was sent to a random sample of 2,000 households from across all areas of New Westminster that were drawn from a database provided by Cornerstone List Management Services. This resulted in a return of 755 surveys. A series of questions about the arts in New Westminster was included in this questionnaire.

Detailed results of this survey can be found in the 2008 New Westminster Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

ARTS QUESTIONNAIRE

In June 2007 two questionnaires about the arts were made available to interested parties on the New Westminster Parks and Recreation website - one to be completed by artists and arts organizations and the other for interested residents. The questionnaires were also available in paper copy for individuals that did not have computer access. Individual artists and arts organizations were contacted and encouraged to complete the questionnaires. This drew 139 responses. Residents were also encouraged to complete and this drew 20 responses. An additional 20 responses were received in hard copy paper form. This resulted in a total of 179 completed questionnaires.



Public Art - Puddle Jumper, Toronto Place

"Culture is to the contemporary city what roads, sewers and bridges were in the 19th and early 20th centuries."

Christopher Hume,
Urban Affairs Columnist,
Toronto Star

Appendix 3

The Arts in New Westminster



*Evelyn Strange,
Vagabond Players,
Bernie Legge Theatre.*

*“The Arts communicate
and speak to us in
ways that teach literacy
and enhance our lives.
We must continue to
find a place for
arts programs and
partnerships not only for
what it teaches students
about art, but for what
it teaches us all about
the world we live in.”*

Dr. Terry Bergeson, State
Superintendent of Public
Instruction, Washington State,
November 2001

The Arts in New Westminster

New Westminster is a historic city with a diverse population, many of whom are involved in and passionate about arts in the community. New Westminster is home to a number of community-based arts groups and organizations including but not limited to:

ARTS COUNCIL

The Arts Council's Office and Gallery is located in Queens Park annexed to the Centennial Lodge. The Arts Council fosters, supports and promotes arts and culture in the community. Arts Scholarships and bursaries are awarded through the Douglas College Foundation and the Hilda Cliffe Grants program. Through the Gallery exhibitions both emerging and established artists introduce the community to various applications and media used in artistic expression. Last Mondays at the Movie series showcases independent and foreign movies. The Art Rental Program provides citizens and business people the opportunity to rent original art to enhance work and home environments. Community arts and culture events include: Arts in the Park, YAM JAM, Summer Arts program for children and youth. The Arts Council website is accessible to the arts community who are encouraged to list their arts and cultural events at no cost. The Arts Council partners with the City, School District #40 and other community organizations to encourage artistic exploration and events.

BURR THEATRE

The Burr Theatre facility has been in existence in New Westminster since 1927. It is a 300 seat theatre that is owned by the City. In the past the theatre has been used by community performing arts groups. The future of the theatre will be determined in the near future.

CHURCHES

Local churches hold musicals and other arts performances.

CITY STAGE NEW WEST

City Stage New West which was formed in New Westminster in 2006 is a not-for-profit society. Their mission is to bring professional theatre to New Westminster. At present they do not have a permanent home and have performed at Massey, Plaskett Gallery, Holy Trinity Cathedral and the Orange Room Café. They attract audiences from New Westminster and from across Metro Vancouver.

DOUGLAS COLLEGE

Douglas College has a 350 seat theatre as well as a studio theatre and a dance studio. Credit programming includes a 2-year theatre program (which is the only program in B.C. that offers full conservatory training), a 2-year Stagecraft program (also unique in the province), and a 1-year Basic Music and a 2-year University Transfer program. The College is also home to the Community Music School, the Douglas College Community Choir, and the Amelia Douglas Gallery for the visual arts. Douglas College hosts a variety of events open to the public, including a popular "Arts at One" concert. The Theatre is primarily used by the programs throughout the school year, but is frequently booked by community groups during the summer.

DRAGONDIVA OPERATIC THEATRE

The DragonDiva Operatic Theatre brings high quality, reasonably priced operatic theatre productions to the community of New Westminster. They bring opera to an audience that may not otherwise experience it because of location, cost, or the elitist stigma that can surround this art form. People of all ages and of all experience levels, from beginner to experience are welcomed. They strive to fill the gap between student and professional for young opera singers, giving them a place to both perform as well as perfect their craft. They attract audiences and participants from New Westminster and from across Metro Vancouver.



Ceramics at Century House, New Westminster Parks and Recreation.

"The arts are a reflection of what's in community and society."

New Westminster Community Arts Strategy interview participant 2007



*Renovations,
Vagabond Players,
Bernie Legge Theatre.*

JUSTICE INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (JIBC)

The JIBC has an auditorium/theatre space for meeting, seminars and sessions. The primary business of the JIBC is to provide education and training to individuals involved with criminal and social justice and public safety (Police, Fire, Paramedic, Corrections, Courts, Conflict Resolution, Counseling and Emergency Management). The 200-seat theatre is available to local and regional groups.

LIBRARY

New Westminster Library has a small space for visual arts and hosts shows throughout the year. The library also provides meeting space for writers groups.

MASSEY THEATRE

Massey Theatre opened in 1949. It is a 1260 seat theatre that is owned by the School District, leased to the Massey Theatre Society. The theatre is home to the Joseph Plaskett Art Gallery. Usage and operating costs of the theatre and the gallery are shared between the School District and the Society. The Society's vision is to provide artistic excellence in educational, community and professional contexts. Improvements to the theatre, lobby, concession, and Plaskett Gallery have been funded by the Society. Local and regional organizations access the Massey Theatre resulting in the performance offerings being highly diverse. The Society subsidizes a three tiered rental structure and offers a free access program called Massey Helps to provide further relief to good causes and fledgling or ambitious artistic projects. A community ticket centre was launched in 2007 and services are available for any event online, over the phone or in person at the Massey Theatre. On average, over 100,000 audience members attend Massey Theatre and hundreds of performers take the stage each year.

NW SYMPHONY

The New Westminster Symphony has been operating in New Westminster for 80 years. The Symphony performs at Massey Theatre four times per year offering free concerts of classical and new symphony compositions. Each concert draws an average seating of 500-600 people. The members of the orchestra come from throughout the region.

OTHER VENUES

There are several businesses throughout the city that support the arts. They include but are not limited to; Van Dop Gallery, Java Jazz, Heritage Grill, Coming Home Café, Neil Douglas Music Store, 6th Street Studio & Practice Space, and Gallery Fourteen.

ROYAL CITY YOUTH BALLET

Royal City Youth Ballet was formed in the late 1980's to bring together young, enthusiastic dancers from various studios in the Lower Mainland to learn and rehearse full length ballets. The Company principals recognize the need for a youth company to "bridge" the gap between dance studio and professional company. The RCYB performs locally at the Massey Theatre and has performed in theatres throughout the Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Island, and throughout British Columbia. They have represented our community in Disneyland, Disney World and have had successful performance aboard various cruise lines. For the past 20 Christmas seasons, Royal City Youth Ballet Company has presented the traditional "Nutcracker", with beautiful sets, extravagant costumes and featuring a cast of over one hundred talented, dedicated and enthusiastic dancers to "sold-out" performances. This non-profit organization is the only one of its kind in Canada.

*“Art is life. It would
be a grey community
without the arts.”*

ROYAL CITY MUSICAL THEATRE

The Royal City Musical Theatre Company was formed in 1989 and presents universally popular musical performances. Their performances at Massey Theatre have become a local tradition. The New Westminister company provides local youth with the opportunity to develop their musical talent resulting in several performers progressing to starring roles in stage productions and movies in Metro Vancouver, other Canadian cities and in Hollywood, California.

SCHOOL DISTRICT # 40

School District # 40 promotes visual arts throughout the schools such as artist-in-residence. There are traditional art classes, visual arts and film and photography at NWSS. NWSS has 11 staff members in the arts department that provide strong leadership. NWSS fine arts programs are highly regarded. The NWSS music program is progressive, multi-faceted and is supported by a dedicated volunteer parent group. NWSS has an award winning improvisation team.

SHADOWS AND DREAMS THEATRE COMPANY

Shadows and Dreams is a local theatre company that produces professional quality plays. The company was formed in 2004 from the simple desire to reconnect with their theatre roots. Their vision is that through fulfilling themselves as artists, they can extend this enjoyment to their audience and allow them to rediscover old classics or be exposed to new works. Their summer productions are Shakespearean comedies and their fall and spring productions cover the gambit from contemporary works, other plays from Shakespeare and other classical works. Their summer show is held at the Queen's Park Bandshell and their other productions are held in rented locations

THE CITY OF NEW WESTMINSTER

The City has an Arts and Culture Endowment Grant program whereby arts groups are funded for projects or events that contribute to the artistic life of the City. The grants are available on an annual basis. A Council appointed committee reviews the grant applications and make recommendations to City Council. The Parks & Recreation provides a variety of arts programs primarily for children and seniors with limited arts services for youth. The outdoor Queen's Park Bandshell and the Queensborough Outdoor Stage are good venues for performing arts groups and community theatre groups. Parks and Recreation partners with several community organizations such as Century House Association, Hyack Festival, Queensborough Special Programs Committee, School District #40, and Arts Council to support events and festivals throughout the year.

VAGABOND PLAYERS / BERNIE LEGGE THEATRE

The Vagabond Players which is one of the oldest community theatre groups in B.C. is based out of the Bernie Legge Theatre. Since their inception in 1937, the Vagabonds Players have staged more than 300 productions. They have raised the funds to equip the facility and provide a learning centre for people interested in becoming actors, directors, lighting or sound technicians, set designers, and costumers. The Vagabond Players are an integral part of the community, and annually host up to six main productions per year and as well as a variety of special events and co-productions. The Bernie Legge Theatre which is used primarily by the Vagabond Players has 140 seats, is owned by the City and leased to the Vagabond Players.

WESTMINSTER QUAY

The Quay is a picturesque place to showcase performing arts groups with its wide and open view bordering on the Fraser River. It is attractive to local residents and visitors from outside the community. Several community events and festivals are held on the waterfront or in downtown New Westminister, including Fraserfest, the New Westminister Multicultural Festival and the Show and Shine.



*Children's Summer School of the Arts,
Arts Council of New Westminister*

"The arts provide recognition of diversity, tolerance and expression. "

New Westminister Community Arts Strategy interview participant 2007

Appendix 4

Trends and Best Practices



*Here on the Flight Path,
Vagabond Players,
Bernie Legge Theatre*

*“The arts are inclusive
and assist us to crosses
language barriers.”*

New Westminster Community
Arts Strategy interview
participant 2007

Trends and Best Practices

Research completed by Warren Sommer, Legacy Heritage Consultants July 2007

THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY ARTS COUNCILS

When the majority of British Columbia's community arts councils were formed by the Provincial Government in the 1960s and 1970s, they were mandated to act as advocates for the arts, undertake services in areas such as the promotion of community arts events and the presentation of exhibitions, performances, art loans, and the like. The emergence of municipally sanctioned arts commissions and the inclusion of cultural services in parks, recreation, and cultural services departments have generally resulted in less clear mandates for the community arts councils. While this is generally the trend other municipalities, the Arts Council of New Westminster continues to have a clear mandate to foster, support and promote arts and culture in the community and has partnerships with the City, School District #40 and other community organizations.

FUNDING FOR ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

Lack of funding is a recurring theme in discussions with members of the arts community, both large and small. Yet although large, established cultural organizations in urban areas may face financial challenges from time to time, their continued existence is seldom in doubt. Smaller, less established organizations, on the other hand, often face chronic instability, largely due to a lack of assured ongoing funding. Local government may be able to assist such organizations through, operating grants, or rent subsidies.

COMMUNITY THEATRES

Many community arts organizations operate in inappropriate (e.g. not purpose-built) facilities and those that have designated spaces often lack the financial or human resources and expertise to undertake the necessary repairs or upgrades. Many community arts organizations and individuals generate insufficient revenue or income to afford the facility rental fees in which they undertake their work. What is required is small, flexible spaces for rehearsals, production, storage, and even performances. Providing or facilitating the development of inexpensive and appropriate space in a community has the capacity to attract artists active in a range of disciplines.

PUBLIC ART

Many municipalities in Canada and United States are recognizing the benefit public art brings to their communities. As a result, they are formalizing and increasing their public art programs and budgets. The finest public art pieces interpret the history, the people and the environment of a community. Each new piece creates an opportunity for community engagement. Public art can be a powerful economic development tool to create a city's distinction and to generate tourism. Increasingly, funds generated for public art projects have a specified percentage earmarked for administrative and ongoing maintenance costs.

THE RISE OF OUTDOOR FESTIVALS

The number and quality of outdoor cultural festivals presented in Canada has increased during the last two decades. Most are presented annually and many are free of charge, making them highly popular with young families. Most festivals have a number of common elements, including live performances, food and drink, exhibits, and retail opportunities. The festival movement was once largely confined to large urban centres such as Vancouver and has become common in smaller communities, each of them drawing upon local strengths and interests and trying to carve out a niche in what has become a somewhat more crowded festival market. The growth in popularity of festivals has presented challenges both to their organizers who now require more skills than in the past and to local governments which are being asked to develop or improve their outdoor facilities and provide grant to community groups.



Justice Institute Theatre.

“The arts give us the ability to suspend your own beliefs and consider another point of view.”

New Westminster Community Arts Strategy interview participant 2007

Appendix 5

Implementation Plan

Implementation Plan

The following matrix is intended to suggest the actions and activities that will be undertaken to implement the Arts Strategy. It should be understood that this Implementation Plan must be quite flexible and should be amended and revised over time as elements are implemented and the situation evolves. Only the Actions and Activities in the first year should be considered to be reasonably firm as each year the status of the plan elements will be assessed and adjustments made accordingly.

	Action/Activity	Category	Leadership	Timeline
1	City Council considers updating the Mission Statement to incorporate Arts and Culture.	Support and Leadership	City	2008
2	The City dedicate resources for a full time Arts Manager who could work with the arts community and provide guidance and leadership and has the authority within the City structure to move the Arts Strategy forward.	Support and Leadership	City	2008
4	The Parks and Recreation Department change the department name and revises its mission and vision to include reference to Arts and Culture to demonstrate the importance of the arts.	Support and Leadership	City	2008
18	The City work with the arts community to host meetings, sessions or socials to exchange ideas among arts individuals and groups.	Community Arts Development	City / Arts Community	2008
22	The City dedicate staff resources and expertise to work with the arts community and provide guidance and leadership while, at the same time developing systems and processes to support the arts.	Awareness/ Promotion	City / Arts Community	2008
23	The City work with the arts community to coordinate promotional literature between organizations such as a common web site or web links.	Awareness/ Promotion	City / Arts Community	2008
25	The City's and the Parks and Recreation web pages include a section dedicated to the arts.	Awareness/ Promotion	City	2008
26	The City replaces the static read-a-board with an electronic message board in Queen's Park at the corner of McBride Blvd. and Sixth Avenue.	Awareness/ Promotion	City	2008

27	City Councilors report on arts festivals and events they are planning to attend as well as their current practice of reporting where they have been, during their weekly televised Council reports or a portion of each City Council meeting be dedicated to highlighting or showcasing upcoming events in the City.	Awareness/ Promotion	City	2008
38	The City retain a theatre consultant to meet with the owners and operators of each of the theatres in New Westminster, Massey Theatre, Bernie Legge Theatre, Burr Theatre and Douglas College Theatre, to determine their mandate and future plans in relation to the needs of performing arts groups.	Gathering and performance spaces	City / Arts Community	2009
48	Encourage inclusion of art at all new community events (e.g.) Farmer's Market.	Events and Festivals	City	2008
<i>By March 2009 review the situation and revise the 2009 Implementation Actions and Activities as appropriate</i>				
5	Steps be taken by the City to attract young, progressive thinking people to work along side people with history and experience with the City to ensure succession planning for the Arts and Culture Commission. Support and Leadership	Support and Leadership City	City 2009	2009
11	Existing community events and festivals be encouraged to incorporate a higher profile arts component (Hyack Festival, neighbourhood events)	Support and Leadership	City/ Community	2009
13	City Council and senior staff review the mandates of the City committees and commissions that relate to Arts and Culture. (e.g. Parks and Recreation Committee, Arts and Culture Commission and determine their respective roles and how they interface with each other and the Arts Strategy.	Support and Leadership	City	2009
14	The City's Arts and Cultural Commission mandate and membership be reviewed to ensure there is a balance of all arts sectors and cultures within the community.	Support and Leadership	City	2009

15	The City and the community arts organizations define their respective roles in the delivery of specific arts programs and festivals as well as their roles in the delivery of services overall.	CommunityArts Development	City / Arts Community	2009
16	Focus on successes and encourage arts facilities to share spaces and resources (Douglas College, private studios)	CommunityArts Development	City / Arts Community	2009
21	Identify affordable and appropriate arts spaces for groups and individuals that do not have designated spaces and assist them to access the spaces (e.g. multi-cultural groups)	CommunityArts Development	City / Arts Community	2009
31	The City uses its 'historic aspect' or its 'sense of community pride' in its efforts to artistically brand the City in its attempt to be distinctive in Metro Vancouver.	Awareness/ Promotion	City/ Community	2009
32	The City make a commitment to work with the arts community to build an arts facility to house a theatre (400-600 seats), break out rooms for rehearsals, banquet or catering facilities, multi-use rooms, purpose built rooms (dance studios, music studios, media studios with cutting edge technology), small and large (500) spaces for people to gather; display spaces for art (gallery) and spaces for literary arts and visual arts (e.g. painting, pottery/ ceramics, woodworking, photography). Create working spaces that people can watch artists in progress.	Gathering and performance spaces	City / Arts Community	2009-2013
33	Consider building the above arts facility in conjunction with other facilities as this assists with operating efficiencies.	Gathering and performance spaces	City / Arts Community	2009-2013
34	The City work with the arts community and multicultural groups to identify all spaces available (complete a space inventory) and develop greater understanding of the specialized needs of art forms.	Gathering and performance spaces	City / Arts Community	2009-2013

35	Maintain the Bernie Legge Theatre, which is a City owned facility which recently underwent renovations and upgrading, maintain the Theatre as the City's 'small' theatre facility and explore options to extend its use to the broader community.	Gathering and performance spaces	City / Arts Community	2009
36	The City work with the arts community to explore the possibility of utilizing existing spaces in community centres, school drama rooms / classrooms, stages and community theatres to share their space with other arts groups for rehearsals, constructing sets or performances.	Gathering and performance spaces	City / Arts Community	2009
45	The City, through its annual grant programs, encourage or assist festivals and events to conduct post event reviews and embark upon enhancement programs for the next season.	Events and Festivals	City	2009
<i>By March 2010 review the situation and revise the 2010 Implementation Actions and Activities as appropriate</i>				
7	The City continue to provide funding to local arts and cultural groups through the Arts and Culture Endowment grant program and increase funding to address the needs of the community arts groups.	Support and Leadership	City	2010
9	Businesses be supplied with information about the value the arts can bring to their businesses and they be encouraged to be more financially and visibly supportive of the arts.	Support and Leadership	City / Arts Community/ Business Community	2010
12	City staff liaise with School District staff and the community to identify arts opportunities in the community that schools can access.	Support and Leadership	City / Arts Community/ School District	2010
17	The City work with the arts community to enhance existing events and activities by offering them in different locations (e.g. Senior's Festival at Douglas College)	Community Arts Development	City / Arts Community	2010
20	The City assist the arts community to develop opportunities to coordinate arts programs and services, systems, resources, facilities, and existing events.	Community Arts Development	City / Arts Community	2010

28	Local businesses be approached to partner with the arts community by sponsoring an arts section in the newspaper.	Awareness/ Promotion	City / Arts Community	2010
29	Approach Tourism New Westminster to advertise local arts events and opportunities outside the community.	Awareness/ Promotion	City / Tourism New Westminster	2010
30	The arts community, with the assistance of the City identifies and develops opportunities where cooperative promotional efforts could lead to efficiencies in arts organizations.	Awareness/ Promotion	City /Arts Community	2010
46	The City in partnership with the arts community, festival association, and planning groups (Hyack, neighbourhood groups, BIA, Arts Council) host an arts focused festival geared to adults (a comedy festival or a jazz festival)	Events and Festivals	City / Arts Community/ Business Community	2010
<i>By March 2011 review the situation and revise the 2011 Implementation Actions and Activities as appropriate</i>				
6	A dedicated Arts Manager employed by the City research grants that are available to community arts organizations and work with the arts community to provide guidance and assistance to access the grants.	Support and Leadership	City / Arts Community	2011
49	The City in partnership with the arts community, festival association, and planning groups identify and coordinate potential funding and supporting sources and opportunities so that resources can be shared and coordinated.	Events and Festivals	City / Arts Community	2011
24	The City work with the arts community to develop a cross-marketing arts membership idea - (e.g. joins and receives a passport that discounts other arts businesses and restaurants).	Awareness/ Promotion	City / Arts Community	2011
42	The City research and develop a Public Art Policy to address public art planning, acquisition/ procurement, placement, and ongoing maintenance.	Public Art	City	2011
43	The City research other communities in Canada to determine level of funding needed to develop and maintain a successful public art program	Public Art	City	2011

50	The City develop required supporting by-laws, regulations, guidelines and funding structures to support street artists performing in business neighbourhoods in the spring and summer months.	Events and Festivals	City	2011
<i>By March 2012 review the situation and revise the 2012 Implementation Actions and Activities as appropriate</i>				
3	The dedicated full time Arts Manager develop incentives and opportunities to encourage working partnerships in the arts between artists, community groups, businesses, schools, municipal departments and other agencies and organization.	Support and Leadership	City / Arts Community	2012
8	A dedicated Arts Manager employed by the City work with the arts groups to structure sponsorship packages that could be marketed to business and service groups.	Support and Leadership	City / Arts Community	2012
10	The City explore and provide incentive for businesses, service and other groups to donate to the arts.	Support and Leadership	City / Arts Community	2012
44	The City develops mechanisms to encourage developers to include public art in their development and to contribute development amenity contributions towards public art.	Public Art	City	2012
47	The City in partnership with the arts community explore the possibility of replacing existing events that are no longer as viable as they once were to events which could include Big Christmas Festival in Queen's Park; Arts Festival at Columbia Street; Lantern Festival.	Events and Festivals	City / Arts Community/ Business Community	2012
<i>Each year of the implementation of the Art Strategy, review the situation and revise to ensure ongoing Actions and Activities are appropriate</i>				
19	The City create opportunities for art groups & cultural groups to know each other, build relationships and work together	Community Arts Development	City / Arts Community	On-going
37	The City encourages developers to provide funding for the arts so that dedicated art spaces be made available.	Gathering and Performance Spaces	City	On-going

39	The City research and develop a Public Art Policy to address public art planning, acquisition/ procurement, placement and ongoing maintenance.	Public Art	City	On-going
40	The City make a commitment to include public art inside and outside its civic facilities and parks in street and neighbourhood beautification project where possible.	Public Art	City	On-going
41	The City in partnership with the arts community create community public art projects (similar to the carving project in Queensborough Middle School)	Public Art	City	On-going

Appendix 6

Arts and Culture Commission Feedback - July 2008

**New Westminster Arts and Culture Commission
Arts Strategy Feedback Meeting
Wednesday July 16, 2008
6:30 pm
Century House**

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councilor Bob Osterman

Arts and Culture Commission Members: Tony Antonias, Ted Drabek, Elizabeth Elwood, James-Jason Lee, Heather Price, Andree St. Martin, Jessica Schneider, William Zander

Staff: Julie Spurrell, Chief Librarian, Joanne Edey-Nicoll Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, Renee Chadwick, Manager - Queensborough Community Centre

Consultant: Micheal Sommers, SMG Columbia Consulting

REGRETS:

Dr. David Gordon Duke, Shirley Tonks, Jennifer Peyton, Lori Watt

1. Introductions were made.
2. Michael Sommers reviewed the methodology of the Arts Strategy process.
3. Arts and Culture Commission members provided feedback about the project scope and the report.
4. 2.0 Mission and Vision (page 5). Discussion ensued around if the Arts Strategy report should have a specific mission. Michael Sommers explained the importance of embedding Arts and Culture in the City's mission statement so that it doesn't get forgotten. It was recommended that in addition to changing its name, the Parks and Recreation Department (the civic department responsible for Arts and Culture) revise its mission to include Arts and Culture.
5. 4.0 The Arts in New Westminster (page 7/8). It was noted that Vagabond Players information in the draft report was incomplete and it was recommended that this section be removed from the body of the report and included as an appendix to the report. It was further recommended that staff contact the New Westminster community arts groups and request that they complete a standard form about their organizations to ensure accuracy.
6. Executive Summary. It was recommended that the report include an Executive Summary that emphasizes the critical strategies that need to be completed first. These include the City making resources available for a full-time Arts Manager. This recommendation was supported unanimously by the Commission.
7. Arts and Culture Commission feedback. Commission members were requested to forward any further feedback to Joanne Edey-Nicoll by completing the purple feedback forms.
8. Next Steps.
 - Staff will create an appendix of the information from tonight's meeting to be included in the report.
 - The Arts Strategy Taskforce will be notified about the recommended changes to the report.
 - The changes as noted in #4, #5 and #6 are incorporated into the Arts Strategy report.
 - New Westminster arts organizations are notified to provide information about their organization and its activities.
 - The report is edited and formatted and presented to the Arts Strategy Taskforce
 - The report is brought to City Council for final approval.

The meeting concluded at 8:15 pm.