

## Cultural Plan Stakeholder Focus Groups - Session 6

*Notes for all sessions recorded by Stephanie Moore  
Notes in Italics are clarifications made by City Staff.*

Thursday, August 12, 2010  
3:00pm - 5:00pm

### Stakeholder Groups Represented:

Arts consultant/advocate  
Viva Musica  
Theatre Kelowna Society  
French Cultural Centre  
Ballet Kelowna

Alternator Centre for Contemporary Art  
City of Kelowna Councilor and Mayor  
UBC - Okanagan  
Kelowna City Band  
Okanagan Symphony

What does the term 'culture' mean to you?

- Enjoying the arts
- Arts, a larger ethos, a feeling that a community gives you when you enter it, can be everything from architecture to parks, etc.
- Everything that is not commercial
- Culture is the fabric of the community - the web that brings us all together
- When I engage in a community - it is the arts that create that web
- Connecting people
- Essential to health and happiness in a community
- Culture is a set of beliefs, or many sets of beliefs, the arts helps us to have a conversation around these sets of beliefs
- It is everything - the ambience - the view from Knox mountain
- It is everything that you love, everything that moves you - old buildings, the lake, the arts
- Sense of place has been the common thread for Kelowna
- Part of our identity
- Role of the arts in community is to express that sense of place and identity
- Getting the message across as to what we value most - expressed through the arts
- Allows people who may come from very different backgrounds and walks of life to come together and enjoy things together
- Allows them to have a dialogue of a kind
- We like to be identified with something that we consider more important than ourselves
- Activities that can contribute to the livability of a city
- Cultural activities are the things that people want to do
- Livability of our community, brings the balance to our community
- Neutral in genders, age and ethnicity
- Freedom to express, with an open mind
- More than doing activities, priority for the city to realize that it is part of who we are
- Expression of who we are outside our work

- Ability to have expression - for some people its sports, for some it is gardening, for some it is painting

#### Kelowna's cultural assets

- The arts, music, art gallery, free music in the park
- just big enough to have one of everything and has strong examples in the symphony, the ballet, etc.
- Cultural district, Kasugai Gardens, RCA, quality of talent that is here
- People are more important than the places
- Talent of the people, the drive to be involved
- all of the arts, the spirit of the people, and wonderful expressions of the arts
- the people that live here, a rich sector of the population that would love to be involved if they only knew how or where
- ability of the region to attract people and ideas to create cultural activity
- ballet Kelowna, RCA
- a lot of background and experience in those that have settled here, expertise
- People that participate, appreciate the arts
- infrastructure, passion and performance groups, wine and food and agriculture
- Choices for people to get involved and choices for the consumers of the arts
- Wide range of opportunity in a small community
- cultural district, wine and food, very unique set up for the city to have the wine right here

#### Strengths:

- so many opportunities
- Always something available for all ages
- We don't have an elitism here that you see sometimes in other communities - its not expensive, you don't have to dress a certain way
- physical infrastructure, attracting young people that have a cultural interest
- youth arts council, time to create room for the youth, create a link to the youth
- cultural district, and the art groups
- Regional food
- Top notch chefs that live in this valley
- artists that we have living here
- new people moving to the community, bring experience and can support our groups
- volunteer culture, ability to attract people, potential to raise money from individuals, potential connection with the wine industry
- UBCO, the professors the students, the ability to do the research
- UBCO will make an impact on our culture
- Food and wine
- Young people coming up
- Lots of Opportunity - classes, recreation centre
- Controversy is a good thing - people are talking
- Gives us practice dealing with conflict
- The people that the university attracts, the faculty and staff
- Students that are coming from outside of the Okanagan
- Ethnic demographic is starting to change
- RCA is an amazing building
- People are choosing this community from all over the world

#### Weakness

- Lost its architectural centre - lost what a built environment can give to a community
- some infrastructure is aging, some of the population are not ready for the new expressions of art
- hard to find a facility to do your art that is inexpensive

- most of the boards are volunteer, changeover and burnout, keeping the boards revitalized is a challenge, too much reliance on government money
- Connections - real gap that wine and food has not been connected with art
- population not realizing that there are professional artists and they should be paid for what they do.
- new people moving to the community, have difficulty letting go of the arts and culture from where they came from
- funding cuts have had a very significant effect on cultural groups
- Cuts have affected the operational costs the basics, the rent, the heat, etc.
- Extremely difficult for young people - costly place to live, with not enough transit
- Expectation that artistic product will be free
- Closedness to newcomers
- lack of connectedness, you can live here for one year or 20 years and nothing will change if you don't do anything about it
- lost professional theatre company
- volunteer burnout happens because of applying and accounting for projects
- Need base funding
- Lack of affordable living space
- youth having a tough time getting their foot in the door because people don't understand there art
- People want the arts there but they might not attend
- Lack of philanthropic leadership among individuals
- competing with the physical attributes that Kelowna has (boating, skiing, golfing)
- missing an ethnic flavor here

#### Opportunities:

- Can we transform a building into an artist space
- Can always do better at letting people know what is happening
- We need to find a better way to reach out to people
- Think about how we want to be perceived - wine, food, culture
- Putting value to culture
- Increase awareness of what it is and how important it is to your being
- Have to have support from the 3 levels of government in order to survive
- The people that get paid really need the support of the 3 levels of government
- Need to diversify financial portfolios
- change perceptions of the value of the arts (in education, in governments, in general public)
- Building participation - perception that they don't have enough time or money to participate in the arts
- Professional development for many groups for writing grants, and other things
- How do we get the money, engagement from those that just have their second homes here

#### Benefits of the Presence of Culture

- Challenging belief systems is also one of the roles of the arts
- The arts can do wonderful things for the economy
- Improves the quality of life

#### What does the City of Kelowna need to do to support and enhance its cultural resources?

- Adopt a strong policy to support the growth and innovation in the arts
- To adopt a regular review process
- To make the arts an equal partner in projects right from the start
- Sustainability for funding

- Increasing base funding for the RCA, that board is also in same place for fundraising and struggling to make ends meet
- More live work space for artists to be able to thrive and live in our community
- Identifying areas that have artistic potential and then supporting those areas to allow artists to use it, rather than allowing expensive buildings to go up and then not having the artists be able to afford to live there
- Support excellence, go for quality, quality in the marketing of the product
- The brand is the Okanagan, and we need to find cooperative ways to promote
- If people are coming from a long way away they are not just going to visit Kelowna
- City role as a funder,
- Keep on supporting the arts, the professional organizations really need it and it is difficult for them to survive
- One of the hardest things is research - there are grants out there and don't have the staff to do the research - city can support in finding funding opportunities
- City can provide an incentive to the development community to build affordable live work space
- *Total amount of money that the city contributes to the arts, the facilities, the events, 1% for art which is for public art - would you spend the money the same way as we have been spending*
- Consulting with the different groups is important
- *Not a lot of wiggle room in what is currently spent on culture*
- We need to keep up the facilities that we have
- Are there other sacrifices that we could make to the broader city budget
- Product development - shift some of the public art money into product development
- Putting the money into the existing organizations so that they have base funding, and that new groups can enter the mix
- Preserve what you have
- May have been over dependence on government funding and you might need to enhance or provide incentives for organizations to diversify their revenue sources
- Encourage and fund the creativity - the entrepreneurial nature
- Investing in capacity in organizations to become more sustainable in the long term
- Maintaining and upgrading current spaces
- More sidewalks
- Getting people out of their cars, out of their houses, get people walking and engaging with our community
- If the developers have to include public art or art space then you can take the public art \$ and spend them somewhere else
- Idea of Kelowna as a Cultural mecca goes along with the idea of better marketing
- Essential to maintain quality and new is not necessarily better
- Operational dollars are essential
- We cannot go after project money if we do not have the core funding
- city could be the matchmaker - see all of these grant applications come in if see ways that groups can work together, city can link them up

#### What does the Community need to do?

- Joint marketing, working together
- All of the small groups are all applying for grants and doing fundraising and always competing with one another
- Could there be an umbrella group that could go after bigger dollars so that all could share a piece of it
- Create the web of communication
- Work more closely with other arts organizations

#### Priorities:

- create an identity, that people can buy into
- stability, and increasing with inflation in operating funding for professional groups

- Recognize, promote, support excellence
- Very fortunate to have KCT but desperately needs to be upgraded
- Need a bigger hall for the performing arts - 1500 seats