

REPORT

REPORT TO: Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee

REPORT FROM: Catherine McLeod, Cultural Development Coordinator

DATE: March 5, 2018

REPORT NO.: ADMIN-2018-0009

RE: Cultural Services Update and 2017 Successes - "State of Culture"

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2018-0009, dated March 5, 2018, regarding the Cultural Services Update and 2017 successes - "State of Culture" -, be received for information;

AND FURTHER THAT the cultural successes outlined in this report be consolidated and showcased in a highly-visible marketing package.

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with an overview and status update on the many initiatives being implemented related to strengthening Halton Hills' Cultural Vibrancy pillar and quality of life. This "State of Culture" report includes highlights of Town-led initiatives as well as those led by Town partners, in particular the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable during 2017. The report begins with some background on the value of culture. This is the first such report for the Town. It is anticipated that similar reports will be prepared annually going forward.

This report is the result of close collaboration between the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division, the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable and the Town's recently established internal Cultural Services Coordination Committee. The Cultural Roundtable was instrumental in developing the content for the community-led initiatives.

The 'State of Culture' in Halton Hills is strong. A wide range of initiatives, both Town-led and community-led, continue to make a measurable contribution to raising the quality of life in Halton Hills. In turn, quality of life improvements are expected to contribute to the economic prosperity of Halton Hills.

1. BACKGROUND:

1.1 Value of Culture

Creative placemaking builds a thriving cultural scene that supports a high quality of life and contributes to economic development by attracting investment. Quality of life was the number one factor listed as a reason to invest in the region as ranked by businesses in Halton Region's 2017 Business Conditions Survey with 65% of businesses identifying quality of life as important (see Figure 1).

In its first ever Cultural Strategy released in 2016, the Province of Ontario noted that:

“Engagement in arts and culture is a catalyst for creative thinking and innovation, and communities where arts and culture thrive attract creative, talented and skilled people to live and work there. These are essential qualities in the knowledge economy and vital to Ontario's future growth and prosperity.”

Figure 1: Reasons to Invest in Halton Region compared to other locations in the GTHA



Source: Halton Region, 2017 Business Conditions Survey

As noted in the Town's Cultural Master Plan: "...changing economies and customs have shifted the way we live and function. With the decline in traditional manufacturing industries, the development of our communities has transitioned into one that is less anchored to infrastructure. Now many industries, large and small, can choose to locate anywhere and are focusing less on proximity to transportation and natural resources and more on quality of life and community attractiveness. As a result, being a vibrant

and culturally thriving place where people want to live is now an essential component of community planning” and the business investment decision-making process.

Culture has long been understood to be inherently valuable. Over the last 20 years, a compelling body of quantitative and qualitative research has been developed to illustrate the importance of arts and culture in a host of areas including, but not limited to, economic development and innovation, community building and social cohesion, quality of life and health and wellbeing.

The following statistics highlight some of the positive impacts of arts and culture in Ontario. These highlights are organized into four categories:

- Economic value of the cultural sector in Ontario
- Cultural tourism in Ontario
- Culture and quality of life in Ontario
- Cultural participation and wellbeing in Canada

Economic Value of the Cultural Sector in Ontario

- Ontario’s culture sector directly contributes **\$27.7 billion** annually to the provincial economy – representing **4.1%** of Ontario’s GDP.¹
- In 2010, there were **301,933 jobs** directly related to Ontario’s culture sector – **4.3%** of total employment.¹
- Direct Ontario consumer spending on cultural goods and services in 2008 was **\$11 billion**.²
- Both Statistics Canada and The Conference Board of Canada recognize creators (*e.g. independent artists, writers and performers*) and creative producers (*e.g. theatre performances, concerts and book/magazine publishers*) as important links in the “creative chain” or creative economy.³

Cultural Tourism in Ontario

- Cultural tourism generates **\$3.9 billion** in GDP in Ontario (Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport).
- **61,000 jobs** are supported by cultural tourism (Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation - OTMPC).

¹ *Provincial and Territorial Culture Indicators, 2010 to 2014*. Statistics Canada, 2016. (Industry Perspective)

² *Consumer Spending on Culture in Canada, the Provinces and 12 Metropolitan Areas in 2008*, Hill Strategies Research, 2010.

³ *Valuing Culture: Measuring and Understanding Canada’s Creative Economy*, The Conference Board of Canada, August 2008

- **15.2 million** trips were taken in 2012 to arts and culture destinations, approximately 10% of all tourist trips that year (Ontario Arts Council).
- **1/5 of all overnight trips** to Ontario in 2010 were by tourists who participated in arts and culture activities (Ontario Arts Council).
- Arts and culture tourists outspent typical overnight tourists in Ontario by a rate of 2:1 (**\$667 per trip in Ontario**, compared to \$374 spent by the typical overnight tourist (Ontario Arts Council).

Culture and Quality of Life in Ontario

- **90% of Ontarians** say that the arts are important to improving the quality of life in their communities.⁴
- **88% of Ontarians** agree that participating in arts activities builds a shared sense of community identity.⁴
- **80% of Ontarians** agree that an active local arts scene helps communities attract businesses.⁴
- The Conference Board of Canada also recognized the many **social benefits** of culture being documented by researchers around the globe – including fostering of community identity, social cohesion and personal development (e.g. creativity, self-confidence).⁵

Cultural Participation and Wellbeing in Canada

- Participation in arts, culture and recreation is an indicator of quality of life in the Canadian Index of Wellbeing.⁶
- There are strong connections between participation in cultural activities and indicators of health and wellbeing. A study by Hill Strategies⁷ found that cultural participants have significantly better results than non-participants. Key findings included:
 - Art gallery visits are associated with better health and higher volunteer rates.
 - Theatre attendance is associated with better health, volunteering, and strong satisfaction with life.

⁴ *Impressions of the impact of the arts on quality of life and well-being in Ontario*, NANOS for the OAC, 2017.

⁵ *Valuing Culture: Measuring and Understanding Canada's Creative Economy*, The Conference Board of Canada, August 2008

⁶ *How are Ontarians Really Doing? A Provincial Report on Ontario Wellbeing*, Canadian Index of Wellbeing, 2014.

⁷ *The Arts and Individual Well-Being in Canada: Connections between Cultural Activities and Health, Volunteering, Satisfaction with Life and Other Social Indicators in 2010*, Hill Strategies, 2013.

- Classical music attendance is associated with higher volunteer rates and strong satisfaction with life.
- Pop music attendance is associated with better health, volunteering, and strong satisfaction with life.
- Attendance at cultural festivals is associated with better health, volunteering, and strong satisfaction with life.
- Reading books is associated with better health, volunteering, and strong satisfaction with life.

Through the continued implementation (and development) of the Town’s Cultural Master Plan, Public Art Master Plan, Economic Development Strategy and other strategic policies and plans, the Town is well positioned to take advantage of the many benefits generated by the arts and culture sector, as evidenced above.

1.2 Evolution of Cultural Services

The delivery of cultural services continues to be strengthened within the Town’s corporate structure, reflecting the importance placed on the Cultural Vibrancy pillar of Halton Hills by the CAO, Senior Management Team, Council, residents and the business community.

Multiple factors have converged to underline the importance of culture to the quality of life in Halton Hills. The Cultural Services division was formed in 2015. At that time, it was delivered through partial time allocations from staff in several departments. Specifically, 30% of Cultural Centre Supervisor; 20% of the Manager of Sustainability and Corporate Policy Advisor; and 20% of the Commissioner of Community Services who was overseeing this service.

To continue to strengthen and fast-track the implementation of key cultural initiatives, in early 2017, the Town hired a part-time contract Cultural Development Coordinator. The primary responsibility of this position was to advance implementation of the Cultural Master Plan and lead the cultural components of the Action Plan between Halton Hills and Wenjiang, China (e.g. Wenjiang Festival).

As part of an organizational refinement in mid-2017, a new Cultural Services section was established within the CAO’s Office – the “Economic Development, Innovation and Culture” division. Within that division, the Cultural Services section is guided by the following:

- **Vision Statement:** To foster the development and celebration of Halton Hills’ unique character, diversity, civic identity, rural lifestyle, natural and cultural heritage and to do so in a way that has the greatest positive impact on the quality of life in Halton Hills.
- **Mission Statement:** To implement the Cultural Master Plan by working collaboratively with a wide variety of internal and external partners to coordinate

the delivery of cultural services, build strong cultural institutions, complete communities, support economic development and grow the Town's creative capital.

Cultural Services is responsible for providing overall corporate leadership and coordination related to Cultural Services. It sets and champions a corporate vision for culture and uses culture as a catalyst for economic development. It will maximize partnerships, collaboration and synergies between internal and external stakeholders in order to deliver effective, innovative and engaging cultural policies, programs and events.

The Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division is overseen by the Manager of Economic Development, Innovation and Culture. Prior to Council's approval of the 2018 Budget, all staff resources delivering cultural services were part-time and/or contract.

As part of the 2018 Budget submission, Council approved the transition of the existing part-time contract Cultural Development Coordinator position to a full-time permanent position. As demand for cultural services continues to expand, the presence of a dedicated Cultural Development Coordinator will make a significant contribution to strengthening the cultural vibrancy of Halton Hills. It is important to highlight that the efforts of the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable and its volunteers were a major driving factor in the Town reaching the goal of putting in place a dedicated resource to cultural services.

Cultural Services is focused on the following priorities:

- Cultural Master Plan Implementation
- Annual Culture Days celebrations
- Cultural and tourism components of the Halton Hills – Wenjiang (China) Action Plan
- Public Art Master Plan
- Public Art Advisory Board
- Public Art Policy
- Cultural Assets Tour
- Integration of cultural policies into key Town documents, including the Official Plan
- Assisting with the activities of the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable
- Operations of the Helson Art Gallery
- Oversight of cultural program elements of the Cultural Centre delivered through the John Elliott Theatre
- Management of the Cultural Services Coordination Committee to coordinate and support cultural initiatives and programming across departments
- Raising the profile of the cultural sector both in Halton Hills and beyond
- Ensuring that Halton Hills' cultural offerings are promoted

- Exploring opportunities to assist cultural sector stakeholders in raising their profiles and developing their businesses through initiatives like increasing their proficiency with online marketing using new technology (social media)

With the creation of the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division, the Town is well positioned to become an active player in cultural development, especially in leveraging culture to support economic development. The creation of dedicated resources to deliver cultural services aligns with best practices in other municipalities in Ontario and beyond.

2. COMMENTS:

Interest in cultural vibrancy is increasing along with the adoption of Cultural Master Plans by municipalities, both large and small. Other municipalities are developing Arts and Culture divisions to address the growing interest in creative activities and the development of markets in arts and culture. Best practice in the sector is to co-locate culture with economic development.

The subsequent sections highlight Town-led initiatives (see Section 2.1), Library-led initiatives (see Section 2.2) as well as Community-led cultural initiatives (see Section 2.3). These sections illustrate the presence of a robust and thriving cultural program.

Overall, key 2017 successes and accomplishments in advancing the cultural portfolio included:

- **Continued implementation** of the Cultural Master Plan.
- **Launch** of the Public Art Master Plan process.
- **Successful** Canada 150 celebrations
- **Hosting** of successful community events (e.g. Culture Days, Doors Open)
- **Progress towards the certification** of the Helson Gallery and expanded program offerings.
- **Enhanced** cultural program communications.
- **Advancement** of the Cultural assets interpretive tour program.
- **Enhanced service delivery with the launch** of the Cultural Services Coordination Committee.
- **Cultural programming** by the Halton Hills Public Library.
- **Extensive community collaboration and initiatives**, including via the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable.

2.1 Town-Led Initiatives



Photos: Culture Days with the Helson Gallery, Public Art Master Plan Community Consultation, Wenjiang Festival

The following are highlights of the status and next steps of Town-led initiatives that are contributing to the Cultural Vibrancy of Halton Hills.

Master Plans and Policies

2.1.1 Cultural Master Plan

The Town's award winning Cultural Master Plan (CMP) was developed and approved in 2013 with the purpose of providing a strategic focus to the partners, activities and opportunities of the arts, culture, heritage and volunteer segments in Halton Hills. The Cultural Master Plan is a 10-year road map to assist the Town in moving closer to the its long-term vision of the community identified in the Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy:

“Halton Hills as a culturally vibrant community where culture is integrated with our economic, social and environmental lives and offers the opportunity for individual fulfillment through access to sports, recreation, arts, culture and heritage.”

In 2015, the Cultural Master Plan Action Plan (CMPAP) was developed and approved to provide the details necessary to act upon the CMP's recommendations. It details short, medium and longer-term commitments needed to implement the Plan. The short-term objectives cover the period from 2015 to 2018.

The Cultural Services section's mission and priority actions (detailed below) are driven by the CMP and CMPAP. The Cultural Services section has had initial meetings with the Cultural Roundtable to assess the implementation of the short-term goals of the CMPAP and will present a report to Committee on the implementation of the first three years of the plan in 2018.

A preliminary review of the CMP and CMPAP progress shows significant early achievements, including new programming, project initiations and policy work. Highlights of how the Cultural Master Plan is being implemented include:

2.1.2 Cultural Official Plan Amendment

A draft *Best Practices Report* investigating the implementation of cultural master plans in several municipalities across North America has been prepared. This report will be finalized and presented to the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee in the near future.

The Cultural Master Plan recommendations were examined to determine which recommendations would benefit from amendments to the Town's Official Plan for implementation in order to ensure that the Cultural Master Plan's objectives are integrated into community planning. A draft Official Plan Amendment has been prepared and is expected to be advanced via the Planning Act process in 2018.

2.1.3 Public Art Master Plan

Following approval of the Public Art Policy in 2016 which will establish a \$100,000 fund for public art installations, work began on developing a Public Art Master Plan. The Planning Partnership was retained to develop the Master Plan. To date, this has included:

- Analysis of Public Realm Initiatives;
- Inventory of existing public art in Halton Hills;
- Holding of a successful public consultation process to obtain input into the Policy. The consultation process included 1-on-1 interviews with key stakeholders, input from the public through Let's Talk Halton Hills (340 site visits), and an open community consultation activity as part of Culture Days.
- A draft "What we Heard" report has been prepared to summarize the results of the consultations. The final report will be presented to the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee in the near future.
- A call was made for applications to the Public Art Advisory Board. The new Board was approved by Council in January 2018 and the first meeting took place in March.
- A draft Public Art Master Plan will be submitted to the Public Art Advisory Board for review and subsequently to Committee.

Community Engagement

2.1.4 Canada 150

Canada 150 celebrations were a big success in Halton Hills and were delivered throughout the year by both the Town and community groups. There were 30 events throughout the Town, including new one-time events, new events intended to continue into the future, and add-on celebrations at established programs and events. The Town was the lead on ten projects, including:

- 3 things for Canada/Halton Hills
- Citizenship Ceremony at the Cultural Centre
- Trees for Veterans plantings

The Town also assisted with the Chamber of Commerce-led “Most Patriotic Town Challenge”, which was fully embraced by the community. The original goal was to encourage residents to pledge to fly 15,000 flags - the final tally was 57,073.

2.1.5 Culture Days

This was the second year that Halton Hills participated in the national Culture Days movement. Culture Days aims to increase public participation in arts and culture year-round through an annual three day event of free arts and cultural activities. The ‘Culture Days Committee’ of Town staff and community partners met to plan the event. The Town of Halton Hills is represented on the Ontario Culture Days Task Force by the Cultural Development Coordinator and a representative from the Cultural Roundtable. There were 23 activities presented by both the Town and community organizations across Halton Hills including 10 Doors Open sites. A multi-tiered marketing campaign was implemented (e.g. facility signage, social media, e-newsletters, 1000 Culture Days Brochures, event posts on visitHaltonHills.ca, ads in the Recreation Guide and Wordsworth, lawn signs, and postcards).

2.1.6 Helson Gallery Exhibits

The Helson Gallery continues to be a major cultural draw. For 2017, highlights included:

- Exhibit attendance reached about 5000 visitors – the highest annual number to date.
- Five Gallery Exhibits and 12 Lobby exhibits were curated and shown last year including the “Celebrating the Artists of Wenjiang, China” exhibit. This was the gallery’s first international show.
- Volunteer docents staff the Gallery during its open hours. About 1200 volunteer hours have been logged.
- 47 works were sold through the gallery, having a value of about \$6,400.
- The Town’s art collection is comprised of 496 works and 104 pieces in the Helson Collection for a total of 600 works.
- The Gallery’s popular Holiday show generated about \$2000 in sales for 12 local artists – the highest sales recorded to date.

2.1.7 Helson Gallery Programs

Programs at the Helson Gallery continued to be well attended. Highlights included:

- Spring 2017 marked the fourth season of gallery programming for local elementary schools. About 270 students participated. Students toured the Helson Gallery then made a studio project inspired by the exhibition.
- A number of Special Events were held at the Gallery, including Family Day, exhibition receptions, Tours, and Exhibition Talks: 296 people attended.

- In August, a Plein Air Painting Challenge was held at Carter Farms, Norval: 25 local and GTA artists participated; 40 visitors in attendance.
- Total attendance in Gallery programs in 2017 was about 900.

2.1.8 Helson Gallery Certification

In 2017, the Helson Gallery moved closer to certification:

- A new Gallery Case with a built-in climate control device was installed in August.
- A microclimate generator for the storage area was delivered in November.

Staff are collecting data from the areas to certify that the conditions are meeting the requirements for certification. More details on the project were presented to Committee via MEMO-2017-0006.

2.1.9 Wenjiang Festival

From October 23 to 28 (2017), the Town, in collaboration with its sister city Wenjiang (China) presented “The Wenjiang Festival”. This week-long celebration highlighted Wenjiang’s arts, culture and cuisine, and incorporated programming from the local Chinese-Canadian community. Key Festival results included:

- Widespread support. A 12-person Community Task Group, including representatives from the local Chinese Canadian Community, Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable and Chamber of Commerce, assisted with Festival logistics. Collaboration also included the Georgetown Hockey Heritage Council; a cross-departmental Town staff team; about 90 Town staff and community volunteers; 9 corporate sponsors; and six Chinese cultural and business associations.
- About \$35,000 was raised in cash and in-kind sponsorships.
- Approximately 1,200 people attended the various Festival activities in-person, in addition to the many who enjoyed the Day of Hockey.
- All festival events were at capacity, many with waiting lists.
- There were 16 public activities and 15 by-invitation activities for a total of 31 Festival activities.
- The Festival engaged the Halton Hills Chinese Canadian community who attended many events.
- There have been requests from the community for continued programming building on the Festival and interest from the Chinese-Canadian community in continuing to be involved in future events and in booking the John Elliott Theatre for future events.
- There was extensive coverage of the Festival on Chinese National Television, Cogeco, OMNI and ActonUp TV, as well as print coverage in the Tanner and the IFP and social media.

2.1.10 Cultural Communications

A culture webpage was developed to promote Culture Days, the Public Art Master Plan and the Wenjiang Festival. A new, more robust, cultural webpage has been completed. It is a one-stop resource that provides a snapshot of everything culture in Halton Hills. The site includes links to cultural organizations and resources in the community in addition to Town-led initiatives. Cultural content has also been included in Town and Library social media (e.g. Economic e-newsletter, E-Fun, Wordsworth).

Cultural Assets

2.1.11 Cultural Assets Interpretive Tour

There is significant interest from various groups and organizations to create and promote cultural tours. A working group of interested parties including the Cultural Roundtable, Chamber of Commerce, Norval Community Association, Acton and Georgetown BIAs, Devereaux House, Credit Valley Trail, and Heritage Halton Hills was convened to discuss the tours and the best way to develop them so as to limit duplication of efforts, and to bring all tours under the umbrella of a recognizable brand. Six priority tours were selected as potential pilot tours. The next step will involve the validation of the baseline tour data and seeking external funding to complete the next phases of the tour program with the installation of supporting infrastructure such as interactive kiosks. Phase 1 of this project is included in the 2018 Capital budget.

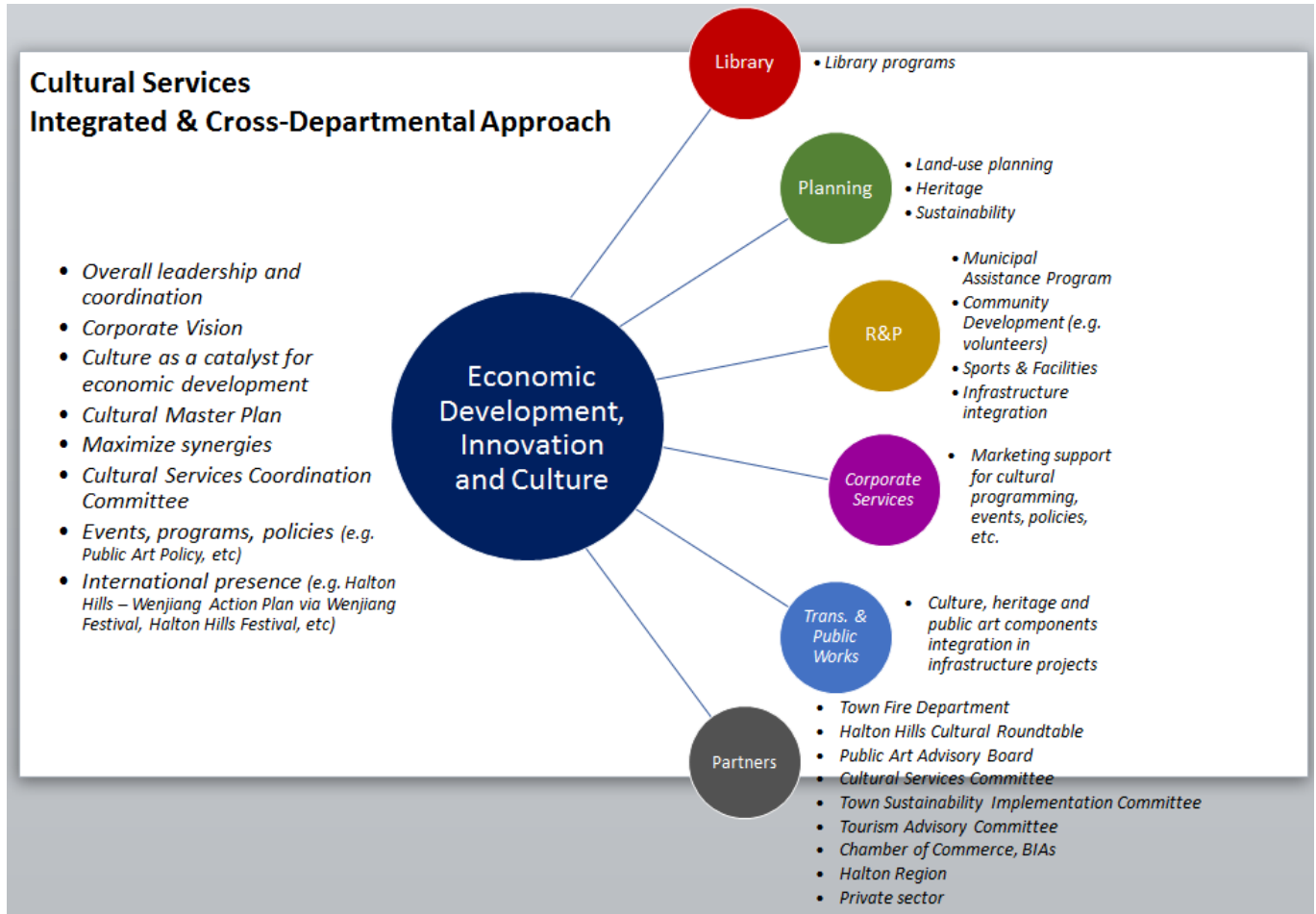
Service Delivery:

2.1.12 Cultural Services Coordination Committee

To ensure the exchange of best practices and integration of culture across Town services (see Figure 2), a “Cultural Services Coordination Committee” has been established. Consisting of Town staff from all departments, the Committee is chaired by the Cultural Development Coordinator. The Committee will facilitate the sharing of information to ensure that all Town and Library-led programs, initiatives, events and policies related to the Cultural Vibrancy of Halton Hills are:

- Fully understood by those involved;
- Well-promoted to Town staff and the public;
- Properly positioned across shared programs;
- Successfully implemented;
- Thoroughly evaluated for effectiveness;
- Reviewed by the Committee; and
- Integrated into appropriate strategic plans/priorities, business plans, budgets and individual workplans.

Figure 2: Integrated Cross-Departmental Approach to Cultural Services



2.1.13 Staff Sustainability Team

Cultural vibrancy is one of the four pillars of sustainability, as outlined in the Community Sustainability Strategy. Through collaboration with the Staff Sustainability Team, the Town’s cultural vibrancy will continue to be advanced.

2.1.14 Town Sustainability Implementation Committee

Cultural vibrancy is one of the four pillars of sustainability, as outlined in the Community Sustainability Strategy. Through collaboration with the Town Sustainability Implementation Committee, including potential opportunities for the exchange of best practices and ideas with the Public Art Advisory Board, the Cultural Services section will continue to advance Halton Hills’ cultural vibrancy.

2.1.15 Regional Cultural Working Group

In the interest of building relationships in the cultural municipal sector across the region, the Cultural Development Coordinator contacted cultural staff in Burlington, Oakville

and Milton as well as Regional Tourism Organization #3 (RTO 3), the Region of Halton, and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport regional representative to assess interest in establishing a regional cultural working group to share best practices, coordinate regional cultural offerings and leverage culture for regional tourism. The idea was met with great enthusiasm and quarterly meetings have been set up for 2018 for this new group.

2.1.16 VisitHaltonHills.ca and Community Brand

This website is a tourism and community information source for activities, events and attractions in Halton Hills, including cultural offerings. The Chamber of Commerce had maintained the website under an Agreement with the Town. The www.VisitHaltonHills.ca website has doubled its reach over the past year and is becoming a known entity for local residents. Under an MOU with the Town, the Chamber had also assisted with the promotion of the community brand. As outlined in much more detail in report ADMIN-2018-0007, it is recommended that the Town assume strategic leadership for tourism services, including management of the www.visithaltonhills.ca website and implementation of the community brand.

2.2 Halton Hills Public Library-Led Initiatives



Photos: Canadian Citizenship Ceremony, One Halton Hills One Book with Drew Hayden Taylor, Dream Catcher Workshop

The Halton Hills Public Library enriches the community with extensive cultural programming throughout the year, often in coordination with community partners. Highlights of 2017 successes include:

2.2.1 Telling Your Story

Carrying over from 2016, this program provided cultural programming for seniors from January to March and was supported by a New Horizons for Seniors Grant. It included the following activities:

- Storytelling through Art Speaker Series - local artists visited Hillsview Active Living Centres once a month.

- Stories from the Heart - a one day memoir writing workshop at Hillsvie Active Living Centre - Georgetown.
- Hook Me and Leave Me Wanting More - one day writing workshop at the Georgetown Branch on openings/endings.
- Paint Your Personality - one day painting workshop at the Georgetown Branch.
- Soapstone Carving - one day art workshop at Hillsvie Active Living Centre - Acton.

2.2.2 Skills Exchange

This program provided cultural programming from April to December for seniors and youth to teach each other skills. It was also supported by the New Horizons for Seniors Grant and included the following activities:

- Write Here, Write Now - one day writing workshop for beginners.
- Skills Expo - a one day event at the Georgetown Branch where community groups set up tables and the public had a passport that got stamped after they tried out each skill.
- Build a Bird Feeder - one day workshop to teach youth basic woodworking skills.
- Felting Critters and Creatures - one day art workshop to teach youth needle felting.
- Holiday Decor Workshop - one day art workshop for youth led by the Georgetown Horticultural Society.

2.2.3 Canada 150 Activities

Various activities were offered to celebrate Canada 150, including:

- Citizenship Kits - resource kits available to the public that include information about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and what it means to be Canadian.
- Achievers and Deceivers: Eight Women Who Made Canadian History Interesting - one of CFUW's monthly speakers.
- National Canadian Film Day - in partnership with John Elliott Theatre.
- Norval on the Credit Festival - the library sponsored the KAIROS blanket exercise and sharing ceremonies.
- Canada Day Celebrations - the library sponsored First Nations welcomes in Glen Williams and Acton.
- Citizenship Ceremony - library led event that was part of Culture Days.

2.2.4 One Book One Halton Hills (OBOHH) 2017

This popular program, now in its 7th year, included a range of programming:

- "An Evening with Drew Hayden Taylor" - the OBOHH author, selected this year to match the library's Canada 150 theme of "exploring our Indigenous Roots".
- Dream Catcher Workshop - one day workshop for families, part of Culture Days.
- "Truth, Reconciliation and the 150th: Perspectives on the Sesquicentennial" - Canada 150 themed launch of the Halton Hills Lecture Series.

- "Spirit of the Bead: A Celebration of Northeastern & Woodlands Native Beadwork" - evening with artist Naomi Smith.

2.2.5 Halton Hills Lecture Series

The inaugural Halton Hills Lecture Series is a collaborative event between the Library, Town of Halton Hills and the University of Guelph with support from an Ontario Seniors Community Grant through the Ministry of Seniors Affairs. The Library will host monthly lectures on timely and thought-provoking topics featuring University of Guelph faculty members. The series will continue in 2018 and was launched in the fall of 2017 with two lectures:

- "Truth, Reconciliation and the 150th: Perspectives on the Sesquicentennial"
- "Why Conflict Resolution Fails".

2.2.6 On-Stage Family

This popular event, produced in coordination with the John Elliott Theatre, has been held once a year for the past three years. It is co-funded by a donation from the Poulstrop Family. This year's performer was Will Stroet.

2.2.7 STEAM Programming

STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics) programming included:

- The ongoing and popular 'Lego Robotics' – offered in three sold-out sessions each year.
- 'Robo Geek', a new offering for 2017 which provides more diverse learning opportunities such as coding. This program is produced in partnership with a local agency Robo Geek.

2.2.8 Additional Cultural Programming

Additional cultural programs offered by the Library included:

- Horticultural workshops
- Astronomy nights for families in Acton
- Knitting Circles at both branches
- Summer book clubs for adults (new!)
- Summer Reading Challenge
- Winter Reading Challenge (new!)
- Wines & Spines
- Researching Your Family History
- The Writers Circle - monthly meeting of local writers at the Georgetown Branch
- Culture Days (also includes Community Journaling and Canadian Mural Projects)
- Wenjiang Festival (library co-presented 4 workshops: Chinese Traditional Painting, Calligraphy (2) and Sichuan Cooking in Acton)
- Family Day activities
- Three book clubs for Children and Youth

- Ink Writing Project – annual creative writing contest for children and youth

2.3 Community-Led Initiatives



Photos: Lucy Maud Montgomery Manse, Summer Events Team, Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable Board

Information in this section was provided by the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable (HHCR).

The Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable (HHCR) is a community-based incorporated non-profit formed in 2009 with a mandate to act as a catalyst for the growth of the arts, culture and heritage sectors in Halton Hills. The organization is funded at arm's length by the Town of Halton Hills through a Memorandum of Understanding and is run by a volunteer Board and a part-time Executive Director. The organization submits an annual plan and report to the Town. HHCR partners with community organizations to help spread skills and experience to enrich cultural diversity and provides support to organizations, individuals and businesses in the arts, culture, heritage and volunteer sectors. Major past achievements have included the Community Brand exercise, and the joint development of the 2013 Halton Hills Cultural Master Plan with the Town. More information on the Roundtable can be found at: www.helpingculturegrow.ca.

In 2017, the Roundtable's major focus areas included:

- Partnering with the Chamber of Commerce for the second year to run the Summer Events Team which supports community events by gathering and analyzing public feedback at public events.
- Providing support to the Williams Mill Visual Arts Centre.
- Supporting the Red Door Gallery project phase 2.
- Planning and hosting the 2017 Cultural Symposium including the Canada 150 Arts Alive Awards.
- Actively participating in key community events/initiatives, including Canada 150, Wenjiang Festival, Vision Georgetown, sustainability and Culture Days projects.
- Local culture sector grant application writing and assistance including 19 summer student placements.
- Hosting sub-sector community conversations on priority topics.
- Reviewing and realigning the Roundtable's roles and priorities based on the Town's new Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division.

For 2018, the HHCR's three priority areas are: 1) to complete its organizational review to ensure it aligns with the Town's new Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division; 2) to support and/or lead key Cultural Master Plan projects; and 3) to respond to current trends within the local cultural sector and beyond. Planning is now underway and its results and recommendations will be brought to Town Council in the near future.

2.3.3 Doors Open

In celebration of Canada's sesquicentennial, Doors Open in Halton Hills featured 10 pre-Confederation sites across the municipality. The event was organized by the Doors Open Committee chaired by Councillor Lawlor. Halton Hills has been participating in this provincial initiative for five years.

Marketing in coordination with Halton Region included a Doors Open brochure, posters, social media and listings on the Provincial Doors Open website. As Doors Open in Halton Region coincides with Culture Days, the Doors Open sites were also promoted through the Culture Days marketing campaign. On Sunday October 1st, 44 volunteers welcomed 862 visitors at the ten sites.

2.3.4 The Williams Mills Visual Arts Centre

The Williams Mill Visual Arts Centre has been operated for the past 23 years as an entrepreneurial establishment that houses over 30 community visual artists and provides event space, education programs and a progressive gallery. The additions of the Glen Tavern and adjacent Copper Kettle have increased the overall site's tourism draw and economic impact over 2017. The HHCR was actively involved in working with the non-profit Board in 2017 on the next stage of the Centre.

2.3.5 The Red Door Gallery

The Red Door Gallery is a community-based visual arts organization, most recently located on Main Street in downtown Georgetown, with a mandate to display and promote local visual art, and provide a centralized hub for the visual arts community to gather and learn. In 2017 the gallery completed its year on Main Street during which it undertook the following activities:

- Mounted 15 exhibitions, hosted over 40 events, provided three emerging artist studios, and an artist-in-residence opportunity.
- Designed and housed the U Room, a recording and event space for local youth musicians.
- Coordinated a cross-community Arts Tour brochure (25,000 copies) that acted both as an insert into the Events Guide and a stand-alone marketing tool.

2.3.6 Lucy Maud Montgomery

The Lucy Maud Montgomery Museum and Literary Centre project began in 2014 when a small group of Norval heritage and literary enthusiasts gathered to develop a plan to purchase, restore and open the Manse, where Lucy Maud spent nine years of her life, as a national tourism site. The project is also actively partnering with existing Norval community activities and events. In November 2017, a successful meeting was held with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport and the project is now proceeding with defining next steps.

2.3.7 Cultural Start-ups

New and emerging cultural businesses are one indication of cultural vibrancy. Halton Hills has attracted new cultural sector businesses as well as seen their growth.

2.3.8 Community Events and the Summer Events Team

Halton Hills has a full calendar of community events, most of which are cultural in nature or include cultural elements. In 2015/16, the Cultural Roundtable held two Community Event Lead workshops to gather information, share best practices and assess achievements and perceived issues within this sector. Based on the results, among other things, the Roundtable partnered with the Chamber to form and lead a 2016 Summer Events Team. HHCR's goal through this program was to strengthen local events' quality and vibrancy. The Chamber's goal was to develop stronger partnerships with local events that draw tourists and to increase the profile of the VisitHaltonHills.ca site. In 2017, a second VisitHaltonHills.ca Team was formed including seven students. The Team attended over 20 major local events and provided a wide range of services including event logistics help; social media promotion; visitor, vendor and volunteer surveys; and post-event evaluation and recommendation reports.

2.1.9 Local Live Music Scene

Live music has the potential to be a cornerstone of local culture as well as a major tourism draw. Halton Hills' local live music scene has seen significant growth in the past three years (e.g. Georgetownmusic.com). Over fifteen restaurants across Glen Williams, Georgetown and Acton now have regular/weekly live acts. Special live music events are frequent and well-attended. Rock the Hills, a youth-focused music festival, moved to downtown Georgetown this year (from the Georgetown Fairgrounds) and used a band crawl model to provide a more accessible and lower-cost event to patrons. Canvas and Unscripted, a semi-annual young adult spoken word event, also has sell-out crowds at each event.

2.3.10 Youth and School-based Cultural Initiatives

Youth cultural clubs, lessons and organizations are wide ranging and diverse in nature with everything from Dungeons and Dragons nights to weekly improvisation events. Both entry- and intermediate-level offerings are available in theatre arts, dance and visual arts for youth. Cultural activities are also integrated into many other youth related activities and events such as fundraising, child care, and community events. All three local high schools have areas of cultural excellence and activity including Acton High's many youth rock bands, Georgetown District High School's (GDHS) award-winning jazz and stage bands, culinary classes and Word on the Street graffiti event, and Christ the King's DancersforCancer fundraiser and Arts & Culture Specialist High Skills Major program.

2.3.11 Volunteering

Volunteering is an important aspect of many residents' lives and a cornerstone of many cultural and community organizations. To sustain the volunteer community this sector needs to continuously attract new volunteers and adapt to changing volunteer needs. There is growing acknowledgement that 'volunteer burnout' is having a negative impact on local cultural organizations and events. The HHCR, Town Community Development staff, Halton Hills Public Library and Volunteer Halton continue to develop and collaborate on projects aimed at increasing volunteer capacity, including pursuing large-scale grants to maintain the current level of community volunteering.

2.3.12 Credit Valley Trail

In 2015, the local Credit Valley Heritage Society, led by a local resident, approached the Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC) with a conceptual proposal to design, build and animate, over a twenty-year period, a comprehensive experiential watershed trail along the Credit River spanning from Lake Ontario to the Hills of Headwaters. Municipal, environmental, cultural, greenbelt and Indigenous stakeholders were assembled and research and design work was advanced over the past 2.5 years.

2.4 Opportunities and Trends

As Halton Hills continues to grow and develop, new opportunities and directions for cultural development are generated. Some of the main potential areas for growth include:

- Indigenous heritage recognition as part of local heritage and building on the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the inclusion of over 10 local Canada 150 activities with indigenous content.

- Expanded multicultural programming and partnerships to continue to strengthen the community as it grows.
- Community Hubs as a model for coordinated service delivery.
- Cultural Innovation Incubators as a model to increase the knowledge and use of innovation tools and techniques within local businesses and non-profits.

2.5 2018 Priorities

As outlined in the Business Plan for the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division, Town staff will leverage the many successes realized in 2017 to continue to enhance Halton Hills' cultural vibrancy in 2018 and beyond. Key projects include:

- **Developing a comprehensive Culture Days program and growing the event.**
- **Implementing Phase 1 of the Cultural Assets Interpretive Tour program** (e.g. verifying cultural GIS data, determining tour branding, launching pilot tours, sourcing funding for Phase 2, marketing material)
- **Helson Gallery Certification** (e.g. complete remaining steps for certification by the Canadian Conservatory Institute).
- **Public Art Master Plan** (e.g. complete Master Plan, launch Public Art Advisory Board, engage public in Master Plan implementation).
- **Integrate Culture** (e.g. identify opportunities to integrate culture in the Vision Georgetown Secondary Plan process).
- **Official Plan Amendments on Culture** (e.g. complete Best Practices report on culture, process OPA on culture).
- **Cultural Aspects of the Halton Hills-Wenjiang Action Plan** (e.g. coordinate and organize the "Halton Hills Festival" to be held in Wenjiang to showcase the cultural, tourism and economic development opportunities offered by Halton Hills).
- **Improved awareness and coordination of cultural activities** (e.g. develop a promotional strategy for cultural programs, lead the workplan of the Cultural Services Coordination Committee).

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Growing and leveraging the Town's cultural vibrancy supports numerous Strategic Plan priorities, including:

- 3B: Promote protection and adaptive re-use of built heritage through planning of intensification and new development areas.
- 5B: Collaborate with community partners to continue to implement the Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy.
- 7B: Work with the Chamber of Commerce, BIA's, the Region, Halton Hills Cultural Round Table, and others to promote sports, heritage, countryside, agricultural and eco-tourism.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This report has no Financial Impact.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:

The contents of this report will be summarized into a visually attractive summary of the 'State of Culture' in Halton Hills and distributed widely throughout Halton Hills and beyond. Additional highlights of Halton Hills' Cultural Vibrancy will be provided by the HHCR as part of their upcoming status update report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life. The relationship between this report and the Strategy is summarized below:

Do the report's recommendations advance the Strategy's implementation? **Yes**

Which pillar(s) of sustainability does this report support?

- Cultural Vibrancy
- Economic Prosperity
- Social Well-being

In Summary, the Sustainability Implications of this report are as follows:

The Community Sustainability Strategy provides a roadmap for continuing to raise quality of life in Halton Hills. One of the four pillars that supports Halton Hills' shift to a more sustainable future is Cultural Vibrancy. The workplan of Cultural Services within the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division will continue to make a significant contribution to ensuring that the Cultural Vibrancy pillar is robust and that quality of life continues to be enhanced.

Overall, the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is:

Excellent

CONSULTATION:

This report is the result of close collaboration between the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture division, the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable and the Corporate Cultural Service Coordination Committee. This is a key achievement and deliverable of the latter Committee.

CONCLUSION:

The 'State of Culture' in Halton Hills is strong. A wide range of initiatives, Town-led, Library-led and community-led, continue to make a measurable contribution to raising

the quality of life in Halton Hills. In turn, quality of life improvements are expected to contribute to the economic prosperity of Halton Hills.

Building on the many 2017 successes, momentum will continue in 2018 with the implementation of the Economic Development, Innovation and Culture Business Plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine McLeod
Cultural Development Coordinator

Reviewed and Approved by,

Damian Szybalski
Manager of Economic Development, Innovation and Culture

Brent Marshall
Chief Administrative Officer