



Report to: General Committee

Date Report Authored: Nov 13, 2012

SUBJECT: City of Markham Culture Policy & Plan
PREPARED BY: John Ryerson, ext.3596

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) That the staff report titled “City of Markham Culture Policy & Plan” be received; and,
- 2) That the City of Markham Culture Policy & Plan 2012 (Appendix A) be approved subject to annual business planning, operating and capital budget processes ; and,
- 3) That staff be directed to undertake community outreach for the preparation of an implementation plan for the Actions and report back to Council on the results; and,
- 4) That Council conveys appreciation to the Province of Ontario for their support of Markham’s cultural planning process; and,
- 5) That Council convey its appreciation to the Building a Creative Markham Advisory Committee; and,
- 6) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to these resolutions.

PURPOSE:

To seek approval for the City of Markham Culture Policy and Plan 2012 to 2022 that encompasses: the vision, mandate, policy, role of the city, six strategies and actions for each strategy and a measurement plan.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Markham Culture Policy and Plan 2012 is a key component of the “Integrated Leisure Master Plan (ILMP) approved in 2010”. The ILMP came out of the priorities set by Council in the **Building Markham’s Future Together** (BMFT) growth strategies. The process of creating a 10 year culture plan was supported by the Building a Creative Markham Advisory Committee.

An overview of the Plan was provided to Council in a presentation in June 2012.

Municipal cultural planning is a municipally led process for identifying and leveraging a community’s cultural resources and integrating culture across all facets of municipal service delivery and decision-making. The Plan was supported by a grant from the Province of Ontario’s *The Creative Communities Cultural Prosperity Fund* in the amount of \$40,000.

The Plan establishes a vision, mandate, policy, role of the city, six strategies and actions for each strategy and a measurement plan.

A. OVERVIEW

Vision

A Creative Markham for All

- A city where creative expression is valued, welcome and shared.
- A city where all citizens have an opportunity to participate as audience, creator, consumer or patron.
- A city that makes places together and experiences creativity synonymous with its growth.
- A city that brings people together to define their neighborhoods and to build resilient and engaged communities.
- A city that embeds creativity and lifelong learning into its identity.
- A city with global connections that stimulate the creation of new ideas that contributes to long-term economic stability.
- A city with strong cultural assets that act as focal points for innovation and invention.
- A city that attracts the brightest and best using its global connections and supportive entrepreneurial environment

Mandate

To enhance and promote artistic and cultural expressions, to share diverse experiences and to engage people through culture.

Policy Statement

Culture is a vital part of a vibrant and livable community. Creative expression in its many forms is core to both our individual and collective identity. Cultural participants, audience members, volunteers, artists and practitioners all contribute to the economic and social health of our community.

As the City of Markham grows, so do the expectations of its citizens for access to quality cultural programming, products, facilities and for opportunities for personal cultural expression. The City of Markham manages significant cultural assets and provides an array of programming for its citizens and visitors. The long-term strategic development and management of Markham's civic cultural assets and the fostering of community-based cultural assets is crucial to the City's future development and its success as a welcoming, livable and prosperous place for all. Culture is linked, both socially and economically, to the broad policy directions for Markham as a globally competitive, sustainable and creative community as outlined in Council's priorities under BMFT specifically: ILMP, Greenprint, Diversity Action Plan, Economic Competitiveness Strategy and the Official Plan currently under review.

Role of the City in Cultural Planning

The City of Markham actively assumes a role in fostering a vibrant creative community. It nurtures and facilitates cultural activity and capacity in the community and provides municipal cultural services. Markham manages cultural assets and provides cultural programs to its residents through the Flato Markham Theatre, Markham Museum and The Varley Art Gallery, along with long-standing civic events such as Canada Day Celebrations and the RBC Milliken Children's Festival. The City also actively supports numerous major festivals and events through Celebrate Markham grants and services provided to those events.

The City's investment in community centres, libraries and parks provides a wide variety of amenities for residents to have cultural experiences.

Through community based cultural development the City of Markham meets its cultural objectives by:

- Helping others to build their capacity for growth and continuity;
- Facilitating citizen engagement and inclusive participation in cultural activity and expression;
- Catalyzing creative expression;
- Stimulating and participating in a creative economy.

Six Strategies

The vision of a creative Markham for all will be achieved through six strategies that form the road map to Markham's creative future to 2022:

- 1) Defining Markham's Identity through Arts & Culture.
- 2) Generating Ideas & Innovation in Markham.
- 3) Connecting Markham's Communities through Cultural Activities.
- 4) Building a Cultural Foundation for Lifelong Learning in Markham.
- 5) Using Arts & Culture to Create Economic Growth.
- 6) Partnering to Build a Strong Cultural Core for Markham.

Actions

There are sixty seven (67) Actions:

- Fifty one percent (51 %) relate to incorporating culture into municipal processes i.e. "the way we do business".
- Twenty two percent (22 %) relate to cultural engagement and outreach.
- Twenty seven percent (27 %) relate to sustaining cultural services in a growth environment.

Some of the Actions are included in the ILMP. They are repeated to ensure alignment with the Plan focus.

Measurement

The Plan identifies the key measures and process for measuring results based on best practice. There will be annual reporting on results to allow the Plan to be a “living” document that can be flexible to the rapid change Markham is experiencing.

B. CONSULTATION

Through the planning process several hundred interested persons and organizations were surveyed and over 700 individuals, businesses and organizations mapped. The department will undertake a community outreach for the implementation of the Plan and report back to Council. It is expected that a further outcome of this process will generate new entries to the database of cultural assets. The launch of the Plan and celebration will take place early in the first quarter of 2013.

Schedule:

- Council approval December 18, 2012.
- Community outreach to inform the implementation plan Feb to April 2013.
- Report to Council May 2013 on the implementation plan.
- Launch of the Cultural Plan and celebration - date to be determined.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

A financial strategy will be completed and incorporated as a component of the Culture Plan. Recommendations involving financial implications and their related implementation strategies will be reported back to Council for consideration. Council is not approving a funding strategy with the Plan as funding will be approved on a project by project basis through the City’s existing business, capital and operating budget process.

Most of the Plan will be achieved through integrated planning across every department.

The financial focus in the first five years will be to sustain and keep pace with growth in cultural facilities and services; undertake studies to understand how best to invest in cultural infrastructure and to invest in delivering cultural services through outreach and education.

The Plan sets out the importance of building on the strength of the Culture Department and Markham in building partnerships and collaborations. It further identifies tools for change strategies that could leverage existing municipal powers and advocate for additional municipal tools from the Province.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Development of the City of Markham Culture Policy and Plan 2012 has been identified as a key strategic priority of Council as a component of the Integrated Leisure Master Plan under **Building Markham's Future Together**. The Cultural Plan aligns with the nine goals of the ILMP. Completion of the City of Markham Culture Policy and Plan 2012 represents a significant accomplishment in reaching those goals established for Council.


Further, the recommendations also align with the draft Official Plan, and the Council approved Greenprint Sustainability Plan, Diversity Action Plan, and the Markham 2020 Economic Competitiveness Strategy.

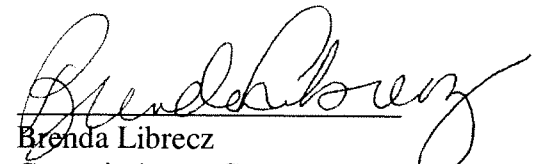
BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Economic Development
Markham Public Libraries
Operations
Planning and Urban Design
Recreation Services
Sustainability Office

RECOMMENDED

BY:


John Ryerson
Director of Culture


Brenda Librecz
Commissioner, Community
& Fire Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A – City of Markham Culture Policy & Plan 2012

