

# CORPORATE POLICY



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## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

The City of Waterloo recognizes that culture is an important component of a city that builds a high quality of life.

Along with economic prosperity, environmental responsibility, and social equity, cultural vitality is a critical pillar to a sustainable, livable city.

This policy is designed to support the city's culture plan by outlining staff responsibilities, a community call to action and formalizing the goals set out in the culture plan. Through the culture plan and this policy, the city will support the creation of vibrant, diverse, high quality cultural opportunities for the culture sector, local residents and visitors to the city.

## **PURPOSE:**

The culture policy responds to the community's request for the city to formalize its policy position with regards to culture and local cultural development. Broad public engagement served as the foundation of the culture plan, and this policy draws directly from the community's ten year vision as articulated within the plan.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- confirm the city's commitment to Waterloo's culture plan: a catalyst for culture, final report (CAO2013-012) approved by council and supporting local cultural development;

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- formally communicate the community's vision for local cultural development, and inspire a call to action to the community;
- formally identify the guiding principles and goals for the city's involvement in local cultural development;
- define the City of Waterloo's role in local cultural development, including both the role of the arts, culture, festival and events and museum & archival collections divisions, as well as the role all city staff will play in supporting cultural development and vibrancy.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Art:** The creation of beautiful or thought-provoking objects or experiences. The purpose of art is to express or stimulate ideas or emotions. Art is unique and original. Art can be functional, but is not necessarily functional. Art can take many forms including visual arts, literary arts, performance arts, media arts and design arts.

**Culture:** Any form of human expression. The resources, practices and forms of expression that are valued, practiced and preserved by the community.

**Culture plan:** A long-term plan that identifies a strategic approach to leveraging the community's cultural resources to support economic, community and cultural development and the integration of culture across all facets of municipal planning and decision-making. The City of Waterloo's culture plan was approved by council on December 2, 2013. The report is titled "Waterloo's Culture Plan: A catalyst for Culture 2014-2024, Final Report".

**Culture sector:** includes individual artists, and other culture workers, organizations and institutions with a primary focus in arts, culture and/or heritage.

**Heritage:** A broad concept that encompasses the natural, indigenous and historic or cultural inheritance of a community. It includes both tangible attributes such as buildings, landscapes, artifacts, and works of art, and intangible attributes such as folklore, traditions and language. The City of Waterloo further distinguishes the broader concept using established practice definitions of a museum, cultural heritage and natural heritage.

**Museum:**

A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.

Source: ICOM- International Council of Museums

**Cultural Heritage:**

1. Monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave

dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

2. Groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

3. Sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

Natural Heritage:

1. Natural features consisting of physical and biological formations or groups of such formations, which are of outstanding universal value from the aesthetic or scientific point of view;

2. Geological and physiographical formations and precisely delineated areas which constitute the habitat of threatened species of animals and plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation;

3. Natural sites or precisely delineated natural areas of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty.

Source: Unesco World Heritage

#### **SCOPE:**

This policy applies to council, all City of Waterloo staff and all city initiatives, projects, and programs, directly or indirectly related to culture in Waterloo. This policy will also help guide the work of the advisory committee on culture.

#### **POLICY COMMUNICATION:**

The policy will be posted on the City of Waterloo website and the internal communication system.

#### **POLICY:**

##### **1.0 Vision statement**

The City of Waterloo's vision for cultural development to be achieved by 2024, is articulated in the city's culture plan as:

**Remaining true to our past, building on present strengths, and making the most of opportunities, Waterloo is a culturally transforming city – vibrant and resilient.**

Culture is the heart of the community and collaboration is the starting point for civic engagement. The city has an artful public realm, where whimsy and spontaneity are encouraged, and public spaces are highly animated. The uptown is a cultural hub that has spilled over to enliven neighbourhoods throughout Waterloo. Intensification of the core has begun and the task will be to balance the city's heritage buildings with new architecture and streetscapes that will foster interaction, are memorable and will

promote a local identity. The business and technology sectors recognize the mutual benefits of investing in a strong culture scene and how it animates people on the street. The City of Waterloo and its staff are valued for facilitating a lively and rich urban experience in collaboration with culture workers, organizations, and regional stakeholders to allow creative pursuits to thrive. City decision-making and resource allocation demonstrates the central role culture plays in quality of life, social interaction, and community well-being. Waterloo is a city where culture workers of all kinds want to live and work, and where they feel appreciated for their contributions. Waterloo actively engages the full spectrum of residents in all aspects of the cultural community.

## 2.0 Guiding principles

The following guiding principles, articulated in the culture plan as identified through public engagement, provide direction for how the City of Waterloo will respond to local culture needs and initiatives:

- We know future cultural development must be **authentic and true** to collective past and present realities;
- We see **vision, leadership, and commitment** as fundamental to encouraging culture to thrive;
- We recognize that empowering citizens to effect change is essential to **community and cultural development**;
- We strive to be **inclusive**, enabling all residents to engage in cultural pursuits;
- We understand that culture and heritage define individual and shared **identities** that shape the community;
- We believe that a **livable city** requires balanced attention to economic, environmental, social, and cultural strategic priorities; and
- We value **creativity and risk-taking** as essential to innovation and progress.

## 3.0 Cultural goals

To achieve the community's vision for culture, the following goals have been identified in the culture plan as areas of focus for the city:

**Goal 1:** Uncover and build community capacity for creativity, expression and cultural engagement.

**Goal 2:** Strengthen the community's cultural heritage identity by uniting Waterloo's past with its present and future through management and education.

**Goal 3:** Enliven streets, neighbourhoods, public and green spaces.

**Goal 4:** Enhance engagement of community diversity to build a stronger, shared sense of belonging.

**Goal 5:** Expand community awareness and appreciation of culture.

**Goal 6:** Foster collaborations in the culture sector.

## 4.0 City of Waterloo role in local cultural development

As a contributor to achieving the community's vision for culture, the City of Waterloo's primary role is to act as a catalyst for culture. Staff across all city departments should consider how their work can contribute to being a catalyst for culture.

The City of Waterloo's role will involve:

- championing the community's vision for culture;
- promoting the connections between community development, economic development and quality of life;
- contributing to funding, in-kind support, and space for culture to occur;
- networking, relationship building, and collaboration within the culture sector and across other sectors;
- acting as a conduit for information;
- breaking down barriers to cultural activities and engagement at the city and within the community;
- connecting the dots – identifying opportunities and bringing ideas, people, and resources together to help make great things happen;
- encouraging creativity and creative expression in all areas of community life;
- collaborating with complementary organizations; and
- celebrating local cultural accomplishments and the value of art for art's sake.

### **5.0 Community involvement and collaboration**

To achieve the community's vision for culture, many stakeholders will need to contribute skills, resources and talents. The city will look to, and encourage, others within the community to take on leadership roles in local cultural development. The city will continue to build on the consultative approach developed through the culture plan to identify community needs and priorities.

This collaborative approach to implementing the culture plan, and working toward achieving the community's vision for culture, will:

- be built on the strengths of the many organizations and individuals that contribute to culture in Waterloo;
- require the talents and contributions of grassroots groups, cultural organizations and major cultural institutions, individual artists and culture workers, the private and non-profit sectors, other levels of government, and post-secondary institutions, among others; and
- harness the community's creative potential and encourage the emergence of authentic cultural expression.

### **6.0 Integration of culture into city decision-making**

Consideration of impact on cultural vitality will be integrated into all city decision-making processes. Decision-making processes should seek opportunities to create an environment in which culture can thrive, and to uncover and build the community's capacity for cultural expression and engagement.

Implementation of the culture plan will require internal change across the corporation; flexibility, innovation and integration will be key elements.

### **POLICY REVIEW:**

This policy will be reviewed when the 10-year culture plan approved by council in 2013 comes to an end in 2024, or earlier as needed.

**COMPLIANCE:**

In cases of policy violation, the city may investigate and determine appropriate corrective action.