



SURREY BOARD OF TRADE
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FINAL – OCTOBER 2019

Re: The Importance of Tourism, Arts and Culture for Surrey's Economic Development Strategy

The Surrey Board of Trade has supported Arts and Culture in the City of Surrey for years. It is a policy of the Surrey Board of Trade that arts and culture support's business and helps us attract business.

The underlying areas for exploration are:

1. How can we be an arts capital?
2. A destination?
3. Marketing/branding to own citizens?
4. Support local artists
5. Be a music city destination
6. Build a Performing Arts Centre

Surrey needs a more robust, aggressive, focused Arts and Culture Infrastructure Strategy

because

Arts Brings Positive Change in Communities

Dialogue opens up through the arts because it deals with meanings, addresses emotions, and helps identify and define individuals and the communities where they live.

1. Arts and culture are powerful tools with which to engage communities in various levels of change (including youth participation, public safety).
2. The arts are one of the primary means of public dialogue.
3. The arts contribute to the development of creative learning communities.
4. The arts help create healthy communities capable of action.
5. The arts can serve as a powerful tool for community mobilization and activism.
6. The arts can build community capacity and leadership.
7. The arts create a community conducive to economic investment and reinvestment.

A great city has great arts and culture infrastructure. From small underground studios to grand concert halls, arts facilities are gathering places that infuse our city with colour, stories, music, beauty, surprise, understanding and humanity. Arts and culture facilities create vibrancy in neighbourhoods, they help us tell our stories, live creative lives, inspire our youth, and they draw visitors to our city.

Arts & culture infrastructure is important at every step of an artist's career and at every stage of artistic development from the spark of an idea, right through the creative process, to presentation. With strong arts and culture infrastructure, our entire arts ecosystem is supported, and all citizens have access to community and cultural facilities where they can fall more deeply in love with our city. The building of infrastructure cannot be attached to other public entities, such as schools, but must be a stand-alone, independently operated facility.



We need to make significant strides, leveraged by City capital investment, other levels of government, and private sector funding, in building new cultural infrastructure.

We need Anchor Spaces such as a Music Centre; **Incubator Spaces**; **Major Community Arts Centres** such as a Performing Arts Centre, Galleries, Art Incubator, and Film Centre; and **Small Community Arts Centres** such as a Performing Arts Youth Centre, and other community spaces. These new spaces can have a positive effect on the lives of artists and the cultural life of Surrey residents and workers.

They enliven our city. They add to those that were already in existence, drawing audiences and participants to take part in a wonderful variety of arts experiences that enrich our lives every day.

Surrey's inventory of significant arts facilities compares poorly to other Canadian cities, many of which have lower populations than Surrey.

- Visual and performing arts spaces was the lowest.
- On a per capita basis, Surrey's performing arts seat inventory was significantly lower than any of the benchmarked cities and less than half the inventory of Vancouver or Seattle.

Since 2007, as an example, both Calgary and Edmonton have added capacity through the addition of large-scale event centres. These venues function as purpose-built arts and culture infrastructure in that they provide the necessary specialized equipment for performance and presentation and support the career trajectory of professional artists and non-profit arts organizations that can rent the facilities.

We need to build momentum

- We have seen how municipal investment in arts and culture infrastructure unlocks and leverages much bigger dollars, resulting in the development of Anchor Spaces, Major Community Arts Centres, and Incubator Spaces;
- Arts and culture infrastructure acts as a driver towards a shared vision for Surrey
- Creative placemaking through the arts;
- We are at a pivotal moment in our history to unleash the power of arts and culture in diversifying our economy and shaping our city's identity.

We are building a city of great cultural spaces. But there is still work to do. The creation of new arts and culture infrastructure continues to lag behind population growth. For the next 10 years, it is also vitally important that we focus on sustaining our current arts and culture infrastructure, and ensuring that we are taking full advantage of cultural planning. We must also make the most of community momentum to encourage the development of neighbourhoods throughout the city that are infused with creativity and supported through accessible and vibrant spaces.

Four recommendations for arts and culture infrastructure in our city:

Recommendation I Ensure arts and culture infrastructure reflects demographic changes and population growth

OUTCOMES

- Indoor and outdoor infrastructure priorities meet the needs of our diverse community. The infrastructure must not be attached to public institutions such as schools but should be independent and operated by the arts society.

Recommendation II *Infuse neighbourhoods throughout the city with creativity through accessible and vibrant spaces*

OUTCOMES

- For Surrey to have suitable arts and culture space that meets their evolving needs in appropriate locations.
- Creative placemaking includes artists and arts and culture organizations to create vibrant neighbourhoods.

Recommendation III

Protect and sustain our current arts and culture infrastructure

OUTCOMES

- Owners/operators of arts and culture infrastructure have sustainable funds to cover operating and maintenance expenses.
- The use of existing arts and culture infrastructure is financially accessible for Surrey residents and workers.
- Arts and culture infrastructure achieves its fullest and best use.

Recommendation IV

Continue to invest in the creation of new tourism, arts and culture infrastructure, building on what we've learned over the past 10 years



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OUTCOMES

- Government, philanthropic organizations and the private sector continue to invest jointly in needed arts and culture infrastructure in Surrey
- Organizations leading capital projects have adequate resources to determine project viability at an early stage of project planning.
- Municipal funds earmarked for arts and culture infrastructure go toward projects that will fill an identified gap in Surrey's arts and culture infrastructure, such as infrastructure that supports Indigenous culture, major outdoor events, incubator spaces including all-ages/youth space, live-work spaces and multi-tenant hubs.
- It may also include infrastructure in underserved areas within the city.
- Increase awareness in and the ability of bylaw and other municipal mechanisms to encourage the development of cultural space and tourism assets.

THE SURREY ART AND CULTURE PORTFOLIO PROMOTION (part of Surrey's Tourism Strategy as well)

City festivals + events

Schedules and details for city-run events

Museum + cultural heritage

View exhibits and hours for the museum, and learn more about the history of Surrey

Artist + maker resources

Join an artist roster, attend professional development workshops or find creative spaces for rent.

Public art

View the city's Public Art Map and installations and learn more about temporary and community art programs.

Public art competitions

View public art projects currently open for bidding and learn more about the formal competition process.

Artist in residence

Have an artist in residence program and read profiles of past artists who have participated.

Culture Plan

Exists

Visitor and Heritage Info Centre

Community events



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A vibrant cultural scene sets a city's tone. When streetscapes bubble with the delights of the arts, knowledge and history, they attract life and pulsate with an energy that nourishes citizens and nurtures community. These connections can ignite the senses and create a sense of belonging that can become the very fabric that holds a community together – a city's beating heart and soul.

Despite living in an 'always on' world where smart phones and social media offer connections at the tip of our fingers, many still prefer to look past their 'friends', 'followers' and online 'circles' in search of more 'real' community experiences.

Cultural infrastructure assets shape a city's sense of community, leading to human interaction and experience that the virtual world simply cannot offer.

How these assets are designed and integrated into a city's landscape also plays a role in the quality of life enjoyed by residents and the capacity of a city to attract visitors.

We need cultural destinations that become synonymous with Surrey.

IN CONCLUSION

Arts and culture are key components of quality of life, and important contributors to urban economies as well. Arts and cultural employment is one of three key drivers of urban economies—alongside science/technology and business/management occupations.

Performing arts and design services accounted for about three-quarters of employment in core arts and cultural production industries. It's the creation of new work from related industries that makes the arts such a key way to generate economic growth. Take dance, for example: Dancers are core arts employees, but they also generate the need for workers who make ballet slippers, build theaters and rehearsal studios, or print programs are employed in related support industries.

The diversity across 11 arts and cultural sectors, including arts education, art museums, community, dance, music, opera, performing arts center, symphony orchestra, theater, other museum, and multidisciplinary performing arts needs to be explored.

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