



Project Overview

In order for The City of Calgary to fully understand the scope of our current cultural resources and plan for future needs and opportunities, Calgary Recreation is developing a Cultural Plan for Calgary. This plan will allow Calgarians to understand what we already have in the way of cultural resources, help identify the gaps and plan for what we need to do in the future.

The plan is intended to be a framework to guide the City's approach to decision-making and planning culturally- internally, across departments and externally with community partners. The Cultural Plan will support long-term planning but will also provide specific recommendations and actions to be implemented over the next 10 years. It will reflect Calgary as it is today and take into consideration the demographic trends impacting the city into the future.

A key issue being addressed by the Cultural Plan is how Calgary can build capacity to "plan culturally". This refers to how both The City and key partner agencies might better consider and integrate cultural priorities, goals and opportunities across a wide range of planning activities. In essence, the Cultural Plan for Calgary will enable and encourage culture to be at the centre of planning initiatives, much like the environment is now a key consideration in all municipal planning.

The project sets out a set of five (5) main goals:

1. Building a base of knowledge to inform planning and decision-making by the City;
2. Understanding the role and impact (both quantitatively and qualitatively) of the creative economy;
3. Developing an inventory of cultural resources through cultural mapping;
4. Undertaking comparative research in cultural plans, policies and funding programs in exemplar cities of comparable size and perspective to Calgary;
5. And developing a long-term framework to guide cultural planning and decision-making internally, across departments and with external partners.

Project Engagement Overview

In developing the Cultural Plan for Calgary, project team members talked to a broad and diverse range of community stakeholders about what culture in Calgary means to them. The extensive consultation process was carried out between October and December 2015, and included:

- One-on-one interviews and small group discussions were conducted with over 60 Calgarians that included representation from creative and cultural businesses, non-profit organizations, Indigenous leaders and youth, ethno-cultural leaders, young professionals, elected officials and senior management from The City of Calgary.
- Seven focus group discussions were held and geared to the themes of public art and festival and events, The City and its external partners, culture and neighbourhood development, culture and Indigenous communities, culture and ethno-cultural communities, heritage resources and conservation, and creative industries and sector development.
- Community soundings were held in six neighbourhoods.
- Two online engagement platforms were available for comment



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- A statistically valid telephone survey of 600 Calgarians was administered to gauge Calgarians' perceptions of culture and to understand current types of participation.

To increase ownership of the Cultural Plan, set a foundation for implementation, as well as gain insight from the community, the project team further engaged stakeholders through:

- The development of a project Steering Committee
- Dialogue with City of Calgary cross-departmental sessions
- **A Cultural Forum with diverse stakeholders**
- Online engagement opportunities
- Key Informant Interviews (Internal and External)
- Community Soundings and Focus Groups
- City Council Working Sessions

Cultural Forum Stakeholder Engagement

What we Asked

Approximately 70 representatives from various community sectors participated in the February Cultural Forum. The agenda included an overview and aim of the project, a brief presentation on what engagement and research has occurred to date and what preliminary findings were being made. Participants were encouraged to direct specific questions to project team members present.

Forum participants were also asked to move through a series of facilitated breakout sessions. Each session focused on one of four (4) draft strategic priorities being considered in the developing plan. Through facilitated dialogue participants were asked to consider how the strategic priority area being discussed resonated with them, what gaps if any existed and how they could see their respective work aligning with and supporting the priorities and plan.

What we Heard

Theme #1 - Recognize the Role of Neighbourhoods in Cultural Expression:

- Neighbourhoods are places and spaces where people connect at various levels that require support from the City and community
- Neighbourhoods are places where unique groups develop and collaborate
- Neighbourhoods are places where accessible and affordable programming opportunities currently exist
- City Centre/centre core neighbourhoods should be considered – focus is not only on suburban neighbourhoods



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- Calgary's neighbourhoods build our community - but can use more help from the City (funding/resources)
- The current Community Association role can impede/limit access and programming
- Plan to support the programming gaps that currently exist (i.e. newcomers/youth/etc.)
- There is a need to move beyond traditional recreation programming

Theme #2 - Conserve and Celebrate Calgary's Unique Heritage:

- Developing strategies need to support/encourage greater awareness
- The emerging plan needs to move us from "nice to have" to "must have" thinking – by suggesting regulated/legislated policy and best practice
- Focus has been on protecting physical/tangible assets and conserving special places/environment - need to shift to today's concept of heritage that includes people, language, culture and history
- City can support the building of awareness to support protection and conservation efforts by co-producing/building a tool kit
- Link and build awareness and appreciation with the community through education/curriculum

Theme #3 - Harness the Potential of Calgary's Arts & Culture Sector and Creative Industries

- Use "foster, develop, encourage and create awareness" - instead of the word "harness"
- Work is currently being done by others i.e. CADA/Calgary CED/etc.
- Align all plans that exist and focus today's work on action
- Work to fund, resource and support
- There is a strong desire to move from conversation to action

Theme #4 - Strengthen and Promote of Calgary's Diversity Advantage

- Need to define "diversity" and "inclusion" in context of the plan
- Need to create strategies that are unique to ethno-cultural communities and indigenous people separately but do not suggest/create a "them and us" approach
- Need to increase connection to and awareness of indigenous people in Calgary's landscape
- Consider and focus on reach – How do we reach, connect to and include others?



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- City of Calgary – act as model to demonstrate reach, connection and inclusion
- Need to develop physical spaces and places for culture to be practiced
- Plan needs to address the current gaps that exist for other groups not currently participating (i.e. LGBTQ)

The project team also met with the project's steering committee to share what was heard at the February stakeholder forum. Steering committee members reflected on input and shared additional ideas to help shape the plan's four developing priority areas.

What We Did

The project team and lead consultant are currently reviewing stakeholder input with the aim to incorporate comments and recommendations into the next draft of the plan. Specific comments to revisit terminology used and input meant to help shape the focus of the four priorities embedded in the plan are being considered. The plan development process will remain an open and inclusive process to ensure any and all other stakeholders groups can contribute.

Next steps

Include:

- ▶ The Consultants are reviewing input and drafting the next iteration of the plan - scheduled for May 2016
- ▶ Project Steering Committee will meet to review new draft of the plan in June
- ▶ Stakeholders can expect to see the final version of the plan as it is shared with City Council in fall 2016