



Hamilton



ARTS ADVISORY COMMISSION



The
BIG
PICTURE
2017
arts forum

A Report of the April 2017
Arts Community Consultation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE BIG PICTURE 2017 REPORT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

THE ARTS ADVISORY COMMISSION

The purpose of the Arts Advisory Commission (AAC) is to advise Hamilton Council regarding the arts community in the City and how to facilitate and ensure its growth and development. To that end, the AAC conducted a forum and conference for the arts and culture community in April this year -

The Big Picture 2017.

There have been other Big Picture conferences, the last one in 2009. Since the previous conference, Hamilton had developed a cultural plan and added new granting programs, in response to recommendations coming out of that forum. An enrichment fund was created whereby previous funding programs were overhauled and infused with an additional \$1 million for four new Arts funding streams.

Big Picture 2017 participants were asked to respond to four questions:

1. What is working well in Hamilton?
2. What is not working well in Hamilton?
3. How can we improve on the current situation?
4. How can the City and our arts community work together to make it happen?

The conference kicked off with a general information session in the morning to welcome participants and review purpose, goals and organization. This was followed by in-depth break-out sessions, which were repeated later in the day to enhance participation. The conference concluded with a review of what had been recorded during the sessions.

Eight topics were chosen for the individual break-out sessions:

1. Arts Funding
2. Sustainable Living
3. Creative Space
4. Audience Outreach
5. Art Events
6. Art in Public Spaces
7. Cultural Diversity
8. Geographic Challenges

To complement the findings and results of the Big Picture event, an on-line survey was conducted to invite commentary from other members of Hamilton's arts and culture community who had been unable to attend the Big Picture.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

There is much that is working well for the arts community in the city but there were suggestions for some issues which need consideration. While the break-out groups tried to stay on the topic to which they had been charged, there were a number of common and cross cutting themes. These are listed below:

1. **Communication, Education and Training** - Improve communication on arts related matters at City Hall as well as within the arts community. Make the funding application process easier and simpler. Support initiatives to hold cultural events throughout the city. Make sure that other aspects of city management are brought on-board for major events, for example parking staff. Generally provide more opportunity to showcase the city's culture and arts.
2. **Space** - Consider leveraging unused space in the city. Explore de-centralizing aspects of the arts to other locations than the core. Make city owned facilities more readily available for arts and cultural events. Permit extended free parking at city events where possible.
3. **Diversity** - Support and promote the diversity of talent across the City in the arts and culture industries. As a starting point ensure the make-up of the AAC reflects the cultural background of the arts community.

A full report by the Hamilton Arts Council engaged by the AAC to assist in managing the Big Picture process is attached.

Ray Rivers, Member, Arts Advisory Commission

INTRODUCTION

THE BIG PICTURE 2017 REPORT OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

THE ARTS ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Arts Advisory Commission of the City of Hamilton (AAC) contracted the Hamilton Arts Council to facilitate a day-long artist forum, The Big Picture Revisited, which took place on Saturday April 8, 2017. This forum provided artists and cultural workers in Hamilton the opportunity, similar to previous AAC Big Picture forums, to share experiences and challenges that will be used to guide the on-going efforts of the AAC.

This forum was timely, in that the Hamilton's arts community continues to be a strong contributor to city's growth and advancement, which has resulted in a heightened appreciation for the arts. The Hamilton arts community has offered new hope for the city's economic future, and has been validated by a new municipal Cultural Plan and new granting programs for arts and cultural groups as spearheaded by the AAC's Arts Funding Task Force.

While The Big Picture 2017 embraces the support demonstrated by the City of Hamilton, this forum advanced the conversations to include the challenges of the arts community as well as its successes. Throughout a morning panel discussion and a day filled with roundtable discussions on eight topics, many challenges and solutions were offered by a broad spectrum of artists to ensure that Hamilton's arts community remains sustainable and will be a further generator of growth and advancement for the greater City of Hamilton for years to come.

This report provides an overview of the discussions held and the on-line survey that followed. Each section provides its share of recommended actions as defined by the forum participants. Based on all of the information gathered from the Big Picture 2017 forum initiative, the ACC has included list of key recommendations that have been identified as feasible actions that will positively impact Hamilton's arts sector going forward.

These actions begin with the composition of the AAC itself, and extend to include a review of the City Enrichment Fund process, as well as improvements in communications and transparency that would better serve the City's relationship with its arts and cultural workers.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:

1. Ensure cultural diversity is reflected in the membership of the Arts Advisory Commission.
2. Create and broadly communicate a timeline and map of upcoming public art opportunities to allow more lead time for artists to conceive proposals.
3. Coordinate promotional efforts of Tourism Hamilton and the Hamilton Arts Council to centralize and jointly promote a single online destination for arts and cultural listings.
4. Undertake a communications review of City processes impacting the arts, particularly in the areas of adaptive reuse of buildings and festivals and events, with the goal of creating more transparency and understanding of these processes.
5. Engage arts community in a review of City Enrichment Fund processes, particularly in the areas of application language, equity, adjudication, and the 30% cap on individual artist grants
6. Advocate for fair compensation for artists based on professional standards through public communications and the practice of fair payment for all arts and cultural needs within the City of Hamilton.
7. Advocate for transit improvements and equitable ward boundaries as policy issues with strong implications for access to arts and culture.

Members of the Arts Advisory Commission 2016-2018

Elena Balaska
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BACKGROUND

The Arts Advisory Commission of the City of Hamilton (AAC) hosted a day-long event convening members of Hamilton's diverse arts and cultural community to discuss the current state of Hamilton's cultural revival and identify the next steps required to ensure the ongoing success of local artists and their organizations. This event was structured in the tradition of 2009's The Big Picture and 2010's The Big Picture Revisited as an opportunity for the local artists and arts leaders to share impressions and ideas that will help the AAC shape the direction of its work and priorities in the coming years.

In 2009, the prevailing dialogue at The Big Picture revolved around arts funding, with the

stagnation in organizational grants and lack of opportunities for new groups and artists emerging as key concerns. As a result of these conversations, the AAC convened an Arts Funding Task Force that spearheaded the creation of the City Enrichment Fund, a new funding program that has overhauled municipal funding for Arts recipients as well as wider community organizations and initiatives. The infusion of an additional \$1 million in increased spending on four new Arts funding streams over the past three years has created valuable new supports for the arts in Hamilton, from increased funding to organizations of all sizes to new granting opportunities to individual artists and arts collectives.

Against the backdrop of these recent accomplishments, The Big Picture 2017 presented an opportunity for the arts community to collectively reflect upon these new developments as well as the larger climate of heightened culture activity and awareness in Hamilton. While this city has seen significant growth in its artistic offerings, these successes also present challenges in terms of cultural capacities, resources and affordability.

CONSULTATION DESIGN

Participants in The Big Picture 2017 were presented with six possible roundtable discussion topics: Arts Funding, Sustainable Living, Creative Space, Arts Events, Audience Development, and Art in Public Space. During morning registration, participants were invited to post questions and comments relevant to these topics, as well as suggest additional topics for discussion. As a result of this input, two additional roundtable opportunities were presented to discuss Cultural Diversity and Geographic Challenges as they pertain to Hamilton's arts and cultural community.

Participants were given opportunity to contribute to a maximum of four roundtable discussions throughout the day, allowing them to address multiple topics of interest. Each topic was assigned to a facilitator from the AAC with support from City staff as notetakers and co-facilitators. In the 40 minutes allocated to each round of discussion, participants were asked to address the following questions in relation to their given topic:

1. What is working well in Hamilton?
2. What is not working well in Hamilton?
3. How can we improve on the current situation?
4. How can the City and our arts community work together to make it happen?

Each group was also asked to identify three priority action items emerging from their conversations. Facilitators were also responsible for reviewing the outcomes of all discussions on their topic and providing an overview of recurring themes and priorities during a shared convening session at the end of the day's program.

ARTS FUNDING

With an additional \$1 million invested in arts funding since 2015 through the City Enrichment Fund, and new granting opportunities available to individual artists and collectives, participants acknowledged that much positive change had come to Hamilton's arts funding landscape in recent years. The application has been simplified compared to that administered through the previous Community Partnership Program, though concerns were raised around the relevance of the application questions being posed to artists and organizations respectively. Not all questions appeared to be relevant to the specific applicant type, the language being used was seen to lack clarity, and some perceived the criteria to be geared more heavily towards economic impacts rather than artistic quality.

Further elements of the City Enrichment Fund process were identified as overwhelmingly problematic. The 30% cap on the City's contribution to a project's budget, particularly as newly implemented for Creation and Presentation grants in 2016, presents a significant barrier to artists seeking meaningful support for their work, and effectively limits eligibility to artists with the capacity to raise the additional 70% through either provincial and federal grants or private financial means - in short, well established professional artists and those with ready access to other funds. The eight month wait time between the application deadline and notification of results is exceptionally long relative to other arts funders, and was seen to limit the effectiveness of these grants.

Additional concerns were raised about awareness and perceptions surrounding with City Enrichment Fund. The role of peer adjudicators, City staff and elected Councillors in the granting process is not

clearly understood by the community at large, resulting in worries about the role of bias and censorship in the decision making process. Multiple commentators proposed that the Hamilton Arts Council should serve as an arms-length administrator of the Arts granting stream, following similar models found in other Canadian municipalities; this would place decision-making with the expertise of the arts community and remove the process from both real and perceived political bias.

More effective and widespread communications and clarity on the City Enrichment Fund were identified as an essential first step to addressing these concerns, with a more substantive review of the funding process being seen as a further essential measure. While the original work of conceiving the City Enrichment Fund was undertaken with extensive public consultation, the lack of arts community input in the implementation of these grants risks undermining the arts community's support for this program.

1. Improve communications on the City Enrichment Fund to increase understanding of the process and awareness of funding opportunities available.
2. Engage arts community in a review of City Enrichment Fund processes, particularly in the areas of application language, adjudication, and the 30% cap on individual artist grants
3. Study best practices in other arts funders with consideration towards engaging the Hamilton Arts Council as an arms-length adjudicator and recommender removed from the political process

SUSTAINABLE LIVING

The ability of artists to live sustainably in Hamilton is critical to the ongoing success of our cultural community. In recent years, Hamilton has offered a welcoming environment for artists with relatively affordable real estate and a high vacancy rate, which has been complemented by a growing public interest and excitement about local arts and culture as demonstrated through events such as Art Crawl. With this growing community has come more opportunities than were present ten years ago, as well as more structured sharing of space and resources within the arts community.

While Hamilton artists demonstrate great resourcefulness in creating art with a scarcity of resources, the resulting dependency on volunteerism and funding project expenses out of pocket creates fatigue in the sector that can often result in burn-out. The lack of market support at the local level is equally discouraging as many artists lack a viable consumer base for their creative products, whether these be works of art or tickets for performances. Many participants in this conversation remarked on a default expectation of free labour from artists, and an overwhelming reluctance to buy art, both of which

inhibit even a commercially viable artist from making a living.

At the same time, Hamilton artists are increasingly the victims of their own success through the market impacts of gentrification. James Street North is no longer an affordable port of entry for artists seeking affordable housing or studio space, and while some early organizations are able to maintain a foothold through ownership of their properties, the risk of untenable tax assessments remains a deep concern, as evidenced by current conditions at 401 Richmond in Toronto.

Local artists widely recognize the challenges of gentrification, informed in no small part by Toronto's cautionary example, and want to sustain meaningful conversations around creating a more inclusive economy for the arts. The continued sharing of resources through more organized channels such as the Hamilton Tool Library was seen as a promising solution, while others point to more sweeping changes required around living wages, the provision of affordable space through municipal policy and education on the value of the arts. While no simple solutions emerged from this discussion, participants identified several key areas worthy of further investigation:

1. Leverage municipal assets such as underutilized buildings and development charges to provide live/work space for artists.
2. Advocate for fair compensation for artists based on professional standards through public communications and the practice of fair payment for all arts and cultural needs within the City of Hamilton.
3. Support widespread and accessible arts education to cultivate awareness of the arts among a broader segment of the population over time.

CREATIVE SPACE

A separate series of roundtable discussions focused on the more specific sustainability challenge of accessing creative space for both creation and presentation. Once again, local willingness and opportunity to share multidisciplinary space was seen as an asset, within specific mention made of The Cotton Factory's present operating model and emerging uses of the AGH Annex. Artist-run centres and new creative facilities at the Hamilton Public Library were also identified as valuable supports for cultural producers. Long-term Hamilton artists noted that more spaces are available today for the performing arts than what previously existed upwards of 20 years ago, driven in significant part by an increased demand for these spaces - which is now beginning to impact affordability of these spaces.

Hamilton's aforementioned stock of underutilized and outdated commercial buildings has been a preferred starting point for cultural development, but these heritage properties often lack the accessibility features required to accommodate all users, and resources to renovate these buildings are lacking. In cases where resources and willpower exist to improve properties for accessible cultural

uses, municipal permitting processes and zoning restrictions are seen as significant and incomprehensible barriers that hinder the repurposing of underutilized properties. This lack of meaningful support prohibits the development of cultural assets necessary to support Hamilton's artistic growth, from purpose-built performance spaces to music rehearsal spaces that would be appropriately situated to prevent noise bylaw complaints.

Considerable support was given to the concept of a multidisciplinary arts hub that would pool artists and resources under professional leadership that would prioritize and safeguard creative freedom and experimentation. This space would ideally address local capacity needs for assets such as affordable rehearsal space and a flexible black-box performance space, while also provided centralized administrative services for a variety of tenants. Sir John A. MacDonald Secondary School was frequently cited as a potential future arts hub given the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board's intention to divest the property, which currently boasts a 750-seat theatre.

The mountain was proposed as an alternate location for such a hub that could activate a part of the city presently lacking in visible artistic resources. Additional concerns were raised in favour of a diversified range of creative spaces, including the identification of public pitches for street performance and affordable storefront locations for small-scale activity. There is a prevailing interest in making the best use of spaces that are already available, but also in ensuring that these spaces benefit from improved investment and public visibility.

The City is perceived to have an active stake in advancing the growth of creative spaces in Hamilton through a variety of mechanisms, from making its own spaces more accessible to the cultural sector to providing subsidies and grants to support renovations and repurposing existing infrastructure towards improved accessibility and safety. Many participants noted that Section 37 of the Planning Act has enabled Ontario municipalities such as Toronto to leverage charges to developers of higher density projects in exchange for cultural community investment, with many strongly in favour of seeing a similar approach adopted in Hamilton. The lack of clarity and transparency around building permits and zoning bylaws provides yet another opportunity for the City to intervene with improved communications; for example, a City staff liaison was proposed as an accessible entry point for members of the arts community to readily ask questions and receive advice on developing cultural properties.

1. Implement financial tools to support the development and improvement of cultural spaces in Hamilton through Section 37 or other mechanisms.
2. Identify or hire an arts liaison officer to serve as a primary point of contact for the arts community on building permits, zoning bylaws and other municipal policy considerations.
3. Partner with arts community stakeholders to make City-owned properties more readily accessible as sites of artistic activity.

AUDIENCE OUTREACH

The ability to engage audiences in creative activity in Hamilton is a significant factor in the sustainability of our arts sector. Participants in roundtable discussions on this topic note that many avenues exist for promoting the arts at the local level, with social media, print advertising and partnered outreach between community groups identified as especially effective methods. Arts events themselves were also identified as key opportunities to promote upcoming events through the concentration of arts-friendly attendees congregating in gatherings such as Art Crawl and the Hamilton Fringe Festival.

Multiple online registries and websites were also mentioned as effective tools for cross-promoting multiple arts events in a central location, with specific mention given to Hamilton Arts Council initiatives such as their website and annual print Culture Guide. However, a lack of widespread community awareness of these resources hinders their ability to reach a wider audience. The same criticism was leveled in turn at other established advertising channels, whose audiences tend to be self-selecting in their engagement with local arts organizations. Relying on a limited number of low-cost marketing techniques limits participation to a limited number of recurring attendees rather than attracting new audiences.

Solutions for reaching uninitiated audiences focused predominantly on the role of the public realm. Billboards and advertising through public transit were both identified as opportunities to place cultural promotions in more visible locations throughout the region, as would a more coordinated approach to postering. Closer collaboration between the City and the Hamilton Arts Council in their respective use of online event listings was also seen as a viable way to create greater awareness around a single shared source for promoting local arts and culture. On the whole, both the City and the larger private sector were called upon by participants to actively promote local arts activities - especially those who invoke the arts community in their own marketing campaigns.

1. Make City-owned advertising assets such as bus and transit shelter advertising more readily available to arts and cultural groups at reduced cost.
2. Coordinate promotional efforts of Tourism Hamilton and the Hamilton Arts Council to centralize and jointly promote a single online destination for arts and cultural listings.
3. Support a coordinated approach to postering for arts and cultural events in approved postering areas and City-owned facilities.

ART EVENTS

Festivals and events are an increasingly vital element in Hamilton's arts and cultural scene, with much of our current visibility at a national level linked to major recurring events such as the monthly James North Art Crawl and annual Supercrawl. These two signature events, as well as the work of the Hamilton Fringe Festival, Matapa World Music Festival, and other stakeholders of various scales, have developed more diverse audiences for the arts at a local level, attracting people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. Hamilton's post-secondary institutions were also praised for their support and engagement in this activity, particularly as a means to engage their student populations in the local arts community.

While arts events are seen as integral to Hamilton's cultural success, more support is needed to ensure the sustainability of a diverse range of festival options, particularly given growing perception that Supercrawl has divested focus on the arts in favour of food trucks and other open-street festival elements. Concerns were also raised about the availability of public transit for Supercrawl and many other events; street closures in particular raised calls for a more coordinated approach to parking and public transit to better serve attendees while reducing impacts on surrounding neighbourhoods. Providing free transit to festival-goers, in much the same manner as the service currently provided to Hamilton Tiger-Cats ticket holders, was seen as an effective strategy to reduce parking requirements for special events while attracting audiences for whom transportation may present a barrier to participation.

Municipal support for arts and cultural events is intrinsically linked to the Special Events Advisory Team (SEAT) process, which many in the arts community struggle to navigate. The permissions required to present artistic programming in public space are not clearly understood, and there is one SEAT application to secure approval to hold an event or activity on outdoor City property; even though the event or activity in question can encompass anything from a spontaneous performance in a park to a full-scale street festival with significant road closures. As with the concerns raised around developing creative space, a City staff liaison to the arts community was seen as a desirable approach to clarifying the events process for applicants. More broad-based dialogue between the City and its arts community on this issue in particular was also presented as a necessary step to ensuring municipal decision-makers fully comprehend artists' challenges in this emerging area of importance.

1. Provide more effective public transit, parking and sustainable transportation solutions for festival and event attendees.
2. Identify or hire an arts liaison officer to serve as a primary point of contact for the arts community on S.E.A.T. for events taking place on outdoor City property, use of public space for artistic purposes, and other municipal policy considerations.
3. Conduct meaningful consultation with the arts community on issues impacting the delivery of arts festivals and events in Hamilton.

ART IN PUBLIC SPACES

Public Art was identified as an area of growing strength in terms of municipal support for local artists. An increasing number of significant public art commissions by professional artists including Simon Frank, David General and Laura Marotta has served to reinforce the City's support of local and regional artists in their Public Art program, and improved the capacity of these artists to secure more prestigious commissions in other communities. The City's approach to Public Art, as revised in the recent Public Art Master Plan, takes an effective placemaking approach where works are required to respond to a specific site and its cultural context; this has facilitated the creation of new public art that has deeper resonance with its community rather than perpetuating monuments of art without tangible meaning for residents.

While local artists do enjoy successful commissions as mentioned above, a far greater number lack the experience and knowledge to successfully bid for major commissions. Sitting on juries is a valuable educational tool for artists interested in proposing public art, and some support is currently provided to artists in the form of information sessions and the advice of the City's Public Art Manager. A number of recent small-scale public art calls have reduced artist workload and provided mentoring in the fabrication and installation process to encourage submissions from less experienced artists, such as the three works commissioned for James Street North in 2012. While all these measures have improved the accessibility of the City's Public Art process, professional development in the form of workshops or other supports was seen as a necessary step to elevate local artists seeking to create work for the public realm.

Perhaps as a result of this success, there is a growing appetite among the arts community for a more dynamic approach to public art. This would include increased support for temporary public art, a more nuanced approach to the role of graffiti and street art in the public realm, and embracing an expanded definition of what constitutes a public art work to include disciplines beyond sculptural visual art. Creating artist in residence opportunities for artists to develop a work in response to a given community provides an avenue for artist-led solutions that would expand the possible outcomes of a work of art by integrating a collaborative approach to creative problem-solving.

The notion of artists in residence has linkage to questions of authority in the public art process, which is largely seen to be shaped by a select few gatekeepers responsible for determining sites, themes and outcomes. Rather than responding to calls and concepts handed down by the City, there is a growing interest in having artists take the lead earlier in the decision-making process. Creating a voluntary roster of community members willing to serve on these committees was also proposed as a means of cultivating greater diversity among decision-makers in the public art process.

Mapping out additional public art opportunities in the areas of integrated and functional art, and making these upcoming calls more widely available, would increase the number of opportunities available to artists and afford more time for the creation of responsive art works. Particular opportunity exists in the realm of parks, which are seen to take a cookie-cutter approach to their design. Positioning artists within the design of parks and other public spaces such as upcoming waterfront development is seen as an integral way to create stronger sense of local identity and belonging in our public realm. Additional opportunity was identified in the private sector, where the City could play a proactive role in identifying partner institutions to host public art works.

1. Create and broadly communicate a timeline and map of upcoming public art opportunities to allow more lead-time for artists to conceive proposals.
2. Build local artists' capacity to respond to RFP processes through entry-level opportunities, support and training.
3. Establish artist-in-residence program with opportunities for artists and community members to take a leadership role in decision-making processes.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

One of two topics proposed by participants in The Big Picture 2017, cultural diversity is a broad conversation that calls for understanding of the various diversities being discussed, whether this is of age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality or the visibility of specific artistic works produced via those experiences.

The perception of Hamilton as a site of potential and opportunity has helped attract diverse newcomers to our community, supported in large part by the important work of local immigrant organizations and City support for refugees. This welcoming ethos has cultivated diverse artistic voices at the grassroots level which is manifesting today in new organizations and festivals dedicated to promoting those voices.

However, these new artists and activities struggle to emerge from these promising beginnings within a larger cultural framework that overwhelmingly privileges established organizations representative of European settler artforms. This fixed perspective permeates the processes through which funders and other gatekeepers determine cultural value and lend support through funding and presentation opportunities.

The academic language and challenging budgetary process required of the City Enrichment Fund in particular was identified as a significant barrier to culturally diverse artists who may not enjoy the same educational privileges as the predominantly white artists who receive funding and other recognitions. Just as a review of the City Enrichment Fund for overall fairness of process was called for in Arts Funding discussion groups, the need for significant revisions in granting was identified as a major equity issue for which a more conversational use of language would provide a more even footing for all applicants.

Deeper commitment to inviting and involving diverse artists in all cultural activities in which the City plays a role was also seen as a necessary action, and one that needs to start at the decision-making table. The lack of diversity among the current members of the Arts Advisory Commission is a significant manifestation of the problem, and should be remedied as a first step towards ensuring effective representation on all other cultural decisions. Communicating opportunities more broadly and actively involving those not currently represented are equally necessary to cultivating greater cultural diversity in our arts community.

1. Review and revise the City Enrichment Fund process to reduce academic language barriers and ensure conversational clarity in questions and requirements.
2. Ensure cultural diversity is reflected in the membership of the Arts Advisory Commission.
3. Establish and sustain open communication with members of culturally diverse and underrepresented groups.

GEOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES

The physical and sociological divide between various parts of the City of Hamilton were considered pressing enough to demand dedicated conversation during The Big Picture. While geographical in nature due to the physical fact of the Niagara escarpment and an urban core surrounded by suburban and rural communities, these divisions are politicized through lingering resistance to amalgamation since 2001 which many participants in this roundtable often see manifest in the “us vs. them” views and actions of City Councillors.

Transit and access are implicated in these concerns. While safety fears of downtown have receded somewhat with the broadening appeal of Art Crawl and Supercrawl, the lack of reliable and affordable transit options between downtown and other parts of Hamilton diminishes access to downtown cultural activity, particularly those taking place in the evening or on weekends. Conversely, the lack of creative spaces and events in communities outside the downtown inhibit the discovery and growth of cultural interest among those living in these parts of the city.

While the duality of mountain and downtown is the most common site of discord, participants were eager to advance a plurality of identities as lived by Hamilton's many communities, each of which would be equally celebrated for what it brings to the city as a whole. The arts community has both a strong interest and exceptional capacity to redefine the stories we tell about Hamilton - one that can find common root in our origins and first peoples, and offer up many equal voices in place of a polarizing debate of two sides.

1. Create and sustain creative spaces on the mountain and in underserved rural areas.
2. Advocate for transit improvements and equitable ward boundaries as policy issues with strong implications for access to arts and culture.
3. Identify and advance new ways of promoting Hamilton's many and multiple communities as equal contributors to our unique identity.



SURVEY

Following The Big Picture 2017, the Hamilton Arts Council prepared an online survey with input from the Tourism & Culture Division to seek further input from members of the arts community who were unable to attend the event on April 8, as well as to quantify the feedback and ideas collected during roundtable discussions. This survey yielded a low volume of 45 responses primarily representative of arts administrators (14), arts educators (15) and visual artists (9) with the remainder equally dispersed amongst other disciplines. The majority of respondents (80.1%) self-identified as professional artists of emerging, established or senior status versus 15.6% identifying as amateur artists/hobbyists and 4.4% as students or recent graduates. While these numbers are insufficient to reflect the views of the community as a whole, the responses received reinforce some of the key messages heard from participants in the April 8 forum.

NOTABLE AMONG THESE IMPRESSIONS ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- 80% of respondents (36) identify “public interest in the arts among Hamiltonians” as the leading positive benefit to local artists, closely followed by “Outdoor events and festivals” at 73.3% (33 respondents)
- When invited to select multiple conditions that are not working well for Hamilton artists, 84.4% (38 respondents) included “Availability of paid work opportunities” among their selections
- When asked to identify a single most pressing issue, however, no single issue rose to the forefront; the three leading concerns at 20% each were “Access to local arts grants,” “Affordability of housing and creative space,” and “Availability of paid work opportunities,” all of which speak to financial precarity in Hamilton’s arts sector

These findings support the overall impression of Hamilton that emerged at The Big Picture 2017, of an arts community growing in public awareness through a groundswell of popular festivals and events such as Art Crawl and Supercrawl, but which struggles to support the labour of its creators through work opportunities, sales or grants; as a result, the ensuing increase in real estate values found in Hamilton present a significant affordability challenge to our cultural workforce and creative spaces.

Various solutions identified by participants at The Big Picture were put forward through the

survey as an opportunity to prioritize those strategies that would achieve positive and lasting change in the arts community. We have aggregated these responses by assigning a range of points to each ranked response, where items selected as “High and Immediate” priority receive the greatest point value, followed by “High” priority and so forth; no points were assigned to responses indicating an option as “Very Low” priority.

Based on this calculation, the following strategies are presented in priority order based on survey responses.

High and Immediate Priority

Review accessibility and fairness of the City of Hamilton Enrichment Fund

High Priority

Incentives to encourage development and refurbishment of affordable, accessible cultural spaces

Support for community-engaged arts in Public Art

Leverage municipal assets to generate new revenue to support the arts (e.g. billboard tax, development charges)

Public campaign to encourage local arts consumer activity (buying art, attending shows, etc.)

Medium Priority

Hiring a "Community Arts Officer" to help grassroots arts community navigate City of Hamilton processes

Affordable transit provisions to improve access to arts and culture

Support development of affordable housing for arts workers

Create more collaborative work spaces

Create Artist in Residence opportunities in City of Hamilton departments

Low Priority

Provide business training resources for artists establishing new companies

While these priorities are largely consistent with the volume of commentary given to each issue and potential solution at the April 8 forum, surveyed support for the concept of a “Community Arts Officer” to navigate City processes is somewhat disproportionate to the volume of conversation around the lack of transparency in City processes. While the small sample size is a clear factor against declaring an objective finding on this topic, the prevailing weight of the problem relative to one proposed solution suggests that other solutions may be worth considering to improve the arts community’s understanding and access to City processes around permitting, bylaws and events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the problems raised during The Big Picture reflect economic challenges and trends on a far larger scale than can be resolved by the Arts Advisory Commission. Artists in communities all around the world are negatively impacted by the gentrification that is threatening the livelihoods of Hamilton artists, and require solutions at a higher policy level.

In the absence of such sweeping changes, the AAC is better equipped to address the impacts and outcomes reported at the local level by advocating for measures that will safeguard Hamilton's creative momentum. Each of the recommendations drawn from the eight roundtable discussions outlined in this report are reflective of areas in which the City of Hamilton has the capacity to intervene.

Disregarding the additional barriers that can inhibit change, the AAC can achieve meaningful impact by focusing its energies on specific areas within its reach. These seven actions are prioritized in terms of effort and cost required to implement relative to impact, with the most achievable leading the list:

1. Ensure cultural diversity is reflected in the membership of the Arts Advisory Commission.
2. Create and broadly communicate a timeline and map of upcoming public art opportunities to allow more lead time for artists to conceive proposals.
3. Coordinate promotional efforts of Tourism Hamilton and the Hamilton Arts Council to centralize and jointly promote a single online destination for arts and cultural listings.
4. Undertake a communications review of City processes impacting the arts, particularly in the areas of adaptive reuse of buildings and festivals and events, with the goal of creating more transparency and understanding of these processes.
5. Engage arts community in a review of City Enrichment Fund processes, particularly in the areas of application language, equity, adjudication, and the 30% cap on individual artist grants
6. Advocate for fair compensation for artists based on professional standards through public communications and the practice of fair payment for all arts and cultural needs within the City of Hamilton.
7. Advocate for transit improvements and equitable ward boundaries as policy issues with strong implications for access to arts and culture.

CONCLUSIONS

A prevailing positive theme throughout the conversations outlined here is an appreciation for the forum as a worthwhile exercise in itself - that conversations need to happen more frequently, and that more representation from the City itself needs to attend such conversations to hear these perspectives firsthand. Ensuring that The Big Picture is sustained as an ongoing activity of the AAC should be a priority in itself, though it was also made clear that a full day is likely not necessary for future gatherings.

Inviting more diverse representation at the AAC table is a first necessary step towards sustaining these conversations; it is also a readily achievable outcome that will energize the AAC towards the more nuanced work that lies ahead to review and revise City policies impacting cultural production in Hamilton, and ensure that these processes are accessible and transparent for all involved.

The Arts Advisory Commission should be strongly encouraged by its many partners in this process, from the Hamilton Arts Council to the many participants who attended this forum, and draw upon their collective expertise to keep these conversations going.



APPENDIX A: Big Picture 2017 Flip Chart Notes - April 8, 2017

#1 - ARTS FUNDING (Kyle)

- 30% Cap is difficult
- Questions do not pertain to Artists as directly as other programs
- 30% cap could lead to gaming the system
- Information dissemination on funding needs to be improve
- Hamilton Arts Council newsletter
- Is funded art filtered/censored?
- Smoothing the lines of communication
- Do not forget to celebrate what is working
- Grants can be more business than creative
- A public sphere for timely dissemination of arts related info
- Too much lead time
- Subdivision of arts channels to ensure diversity
- Fine tune Hamilton's Art vision

- Create sustainability with Big Picture strategy
- Examine stages of development
- Decision makers must be entrenched in the Arts Community
- Clarity of application language
- Concerns that large organizations taking most of the pie
- Transparency of who works in Arts and Culture
- City should look to OAC for process mentorship
- Sports and art under same umbrella?
- A Hamilton version of the Trillium funding style (multi-year investment)
- Where are the Public Art Development funds
- Community Arts Development Officer needed

Handwritten Notes:

What's Working?

- City Enrichment Funding - process has changed; 30% funding gap is challenging

- Application is simple but the questions aren't relevant to artists - different from any other application
- City's funding increase - important to acknowledge

What's Not Working?

- New artists don't know about grants
- Transferring art skills to business skills
- Have the HAC as a granting body
- How much is art compromised by having the City as a funder
- Funnel the grant funding through HAC
- As an applicant trying to hard to be hard
- Perception of artist censorship with the City as the funder
- What's the desired outcome
- How are we gathering artists feedback
- What is the mechanism for sharing that information
- Unbiased role of the AAC to bring information forward to Council
- Artists being pointed in a business direction
- Arts Awards at HPL to demo resources
- Does the City need to distribute more information of what's already available
- Some information came up at the Music Open House last week

#2 - SUSTAINABLE LIVING (Sara)

Round 1

1 a) Does every Artist have to have a day job? If I voice my needs (budget, space) for an event - you are heard. Advocate for yourself.

b) Example of Cotton Factory - 2 rents - Artist/office. Hamilton is seeing the value of art

How do we get the community to open their purse string - buy art?

- **Energy/exchange** is more important than \$.

3 c) pay what you can

3 c) educating the community of the value of art.

- Funding - limitations. Artists volunteer hours instead \$
- Artists - standardized fees
- Public - respect Artist need to work for \$

- Budget
- City owned property to the Artist - \$ to the City
- Parking lots -- Artists funds
- Self-sustaining (eventually) City space ex. P. lots
- *business' sponsoring an Artist - company - "Cotton Factory"
- Affordable/safe

Question - How do you get outside your arts community to address the public at large?
Pro - more people are experiencing more art - eg. Art crawl.

c) More areas of the City - mini monthly Art Crawl - Mountain ???

Round 2

B) Access/success getting grants - but not feeling able to make a living - transient work

B) Excitement "But" Artists funding project out of pocket/volunteer - **"burn out"** balance/challenge

B) Passion - \$ not all art is sellable

C) Improve - rent control available / live/work environment

- empty space - 'Art Scape' TO
- What could the City do - housing market
- More dialogue with the City like this
- Nowhere to live
- Funding - specifically geared to Artists - solo, collective
- City enrichment fund
- Hamilton arts Community
- No 30% cap
- More diverse project opportunities
- Marketing - ??? grants
- More opportunities - space - City Hall
- Developers - designated arts District - housing live/work
- Utilize City resources
- Example - new developments - in other cities have to give 1% to the arts community
- More communication opportunities *Artist/City/ BIA/community
- Dialogue - "artist" subsidized housing
- Speaking the same language
- Speak business, grants - common goals

Round 3

A) Gentrification - isn't being ignored

- Opportunities can be found for Artist \$ - more... opportunities
- Shared space opportunities are available - encouraging
- Sharing (pooling) of resources - sustainability
- Who's left out? People living below poverty, tool library, built in to revenue
- Grants available
- Mills hardware - affordable space - Artists applying
- Huge improvements in the last 30 years

B) Start-up Artists - difficult to begin

- Large scale - general public (youth)
- Could Hamilton be a living wage City?
- People don't buy art
- C) Host education campaigns. People to buy art.
- Public experiencing education - process of the Artist

- Balance
- Sharing successes within the arts community
- Social media, business
- Access
- D) Cultural Shift - value of the arts
- City/Board of Ed
- Growth audience - leverage - youth arts ed
- Discussion "dialogue"
- Are grants sustainable?
- "Housing" affordable for an Artist

Handwritten Notes

What is Working

- more people are experiencing art
- more opportunities than 10 years ago
- shared space, collectives
- some arts organizations are taking into account people living below poverty line - keep going
- Glad there's a conversation about conversation
- Hamilton community recognizes gentrification
- Hamilton Arts & Letters - opportunities
- Aware of the financial gap where we are and where we want to be
- Visibility of resources, tool library, Cotton Factory
- Sharing of resources - space, collaboration
- Who is left out of those resources

- Tool Library has a matching membership
 - 1 paid = 1 membership for someone who can't afford it
- Grants available, City, HCF
- City built Mills Hardware
- Huge improvements over the last 30 years
- Communication has improved vastly

ARTIST BURNOUT

- excitement passion for your art (funding)
- "burn out"
 - working on numerous projects
 - with more hours than expected
- Art/creation passion
 - Not all art is sellable
 - Challenging for new/younger artist to access the opportunities
- Suggestion - businesses sponsoring artist
- Not affordable to set yourself as an artist, cost of living
- People are forced to choose between survival and creative practice
- It was an attraction - the affordability
- People aren't buying art
- Increase understanding of how to buy art
- Make art visible - promote informal learning
- People buy the story
- Retail sale isn't enough
- Show people art is accessible
- Converting art making to performance art (art battle), it's not for everyone
- Encourage artists to teach their craft
- Balance between making a living and making art
- Be contemporary not advertising
- Maker meets up at tool library
- LivingArts Hamilton
- Myth busing - artists need to get paid
- Encourage citizens to get informed
- Grants the require a charitable organization
- Project based grants not enough, operating grants
- Writers in residence - in Hamilton have them stay/work in social housing
- Not enough and not being communicated
- We (artists) make a product or a process
- Honorarium stream
- CARFAC minimum fee schedule for artists
- Typical to undervalue your work
- Art is free - pay for someone's time

Areas for improvement

- Improve – offer more rent controlled housing
 - Live-work space
 - More opportunity
 - City Resource
 - Utilizing empty spaces owned by the City – live/work
 - Artscape models
- More “dialogue” opportunities such as The Big Picture
 - Artist sharing of resources, expertise, partnership opportunities
- Re-assess the 30% cap on City Enrichment Fund
- More free venues to showcase art e.g. City Hall
- Communication
- Educate the public at large – arts process more visible
- Deeper understanding of process may lead to \$ spending
- Art isn’t free – knowing your worth
- Artist housing – affordable
- Artscape
- Tivoli sold for \$1
- Being an artist affordable

City/Community Working Together

- Can Hamilton be a Living Wage city
- Arts education / City / Arts Community
- Educating our youth to appreciate art
- AFFORDABLE HOUSING
- ART AS A FORM OF WELLNESS, EXPERIENCED
- ART – REACHING COMMUNITY

From post-it notes:

- Extended health benefits for Artists – Artists’ Clinic?

#3 - CREATIVE SPACE (Christine)

A) 270 Sherman

- Demand exists – affordability
- Accessibility – part financial
- Inclusiveness

B) Diversity of disciplines that have access

Sustainability sq. ft. dance, rehearsal, theatre

- Need room for experimental
- Renting is cost prohibitive
- Large scale production space

C) Create collaborative spaces/environments

- 100 together, each alone

- Pooling of resources, logistics to make things affordable
 - sharing of human resources
 - Centralization of jobs/tasks
 - Capable leadership, clear language while still maintaining freedom
- D) Section 37 – not currently enforced re: money charged to developers for building over x stories
- \$ meant to go back into the community – directed to culture
 - On-line resource of art available to install in City buildings – committee to curate and execute
 - Potential use of Sir John A – studios, theatre exist
 - American model – condos with open/collaborative spaces
 - Flexible black box (subsidized) theatre – seats 100

1. Cross-disciplinary, experimental space – SUBSIDIZED (100 seat)
2. Leveraging City space already in existence eg Sir John A.
3. Improved visibility and accessibility to Councillors, City staff who are to represent Culture/Wards
4. Art/Culture should come before \$. Eg. SuperCrawl/Food Trucks

Handwritten Notes:

What is Working Well (all groups)

- 270 Sherman – creative spaces
- growing desire and need for space
- accessibility, part of this being financial
- inclusiveness, if your art doesn’t fall in specific category
- diversity needed in certain areas – disciplines
 - theatre, dance
 - affordable accessible visible space
 - different disciplines together at HCA
- shared space
- 270 Sherman – lots of supporting programs (Cotton Factory)
- Like to see creative space on the Mountain
- Artist run centres
- If I need it and ask – solutions present themselves (supportive community)
- Library
- In-kind space is available in Toronto – rehearsal
- Demand is a positive

- Artist-run centres, library
- Supportive community - if I don't know I can just ask
- Spaces exist, fire arts studio
 - Gap identified in THEATRE, performance

Improve on Current Spaces

- 100 of us together, each of us alone
- pool resources outside of site
 - 3D printer, admin supplies, shipping
 - goal towards affordability, leverage number of people using stn.
- Marketing efforts/partnerships
- Grants, promo, job sharing, front of house
- Small pool of people multi-discipline, sustainability
- Create your own box office
- Arts Councils, etc. with more resources/capacity
 - Help set up strategies
- Have to find capable leadership because bringing together several visions
 - Need to maintain creative freedom
 - Part of collective
 - Our languages
- Repurpose empty buildings
- Retail taxes are very high
- Make spaces affordable
- Artist co-working space (multidisciplinary)
- Subsidized live-work space
- H&S awareness (health and safety)
- Relationships with landlords of empty spaces
- Street pitches for public performance
 - Street show
- Demystified bylaws to get more use of public space
- Dedicated arts community person to help
- Roster for public performance
- Building capacity - no funding agency does operating
 - Public support or promotion
- Feature an artist and organization
- Sir John A. MacDonald - what's happening to the space - work with the school
- Need to keep artists/performers in the city and be sure they don't get priced out
 - Collaborative, affordable, multidisciplinary arts hub in the city

- This could be a live/work space, or not, but the hub would benefit from the pooling of resources (human and otherwise)
 - Ideally experimental and financially sustainable
 - Heard that there are spaces for visual artists but not so much performance/theatre/dance
 - Flexible black box space, 100-200 capacity would fill a gap
 - Cross disciplinary
 - Leveraging city spaces already in existence
 - Facility fee waivers for not for profit groups
- Transparency on arts plans for current unused real estate
- Accessibility is a priority and needs to be improved for business - city could provide incentives
 - Comes up in regard to historic buildings perhaps city could collaborate
- Multidisciplinary, multi purpose space needed
 - Experimental, financial sustainable
 - Able to accommodate large scale and small scale
 - Collaboration space
 - Pooling of resources
- Question for the City on real estate
- Need for something on mountain (theatre a space)
- Music/jam space
 - Need jam space for musicians - safe place where they wouldn't be affected by noise bylaws, etc.
 - Ask the City / what can they do
- Section 37 - this isn't currently enforced
 - Property tax incentives for landlords that have artists
 - Matching grants
 - Grants for bricks and mortar
 - Grass roots community liaison to help demystify holding events and accessing a performance space, guidance i.e. permits, liability, bylaws
- Mountain - no theatre/performance space

How can City and Arts Community work together

- Section 37 – municipal code
 - Ref. code – 6 storeys, developer wants 22, okay but will cost \$ - give affordable units for artists and creative space
 - i.e. give to cultural substructure not sewers, etc.
 - repair cultural loss
- Public fund bldgs. - % of budget to expose local artists in space not necessarily intended as art/ cultural space
- Create web “data” base of art-architecture choose
 - Only works for certain disciplines
- Use existing city-owned buildings
 - Sir John. A. as cultural space including Theatre
 - Need to look into zoning
- Small theatre – needs include black box space, parking, accessibility, lighting
 - Pearl Company not great
- DIY disciplines – building fire code etc. prohibitive

Not Working Well

- Room for rehearsal, exploration, practice
- Affordability, ie. 3 hour at \$200 for room to do a test reading
- Large scale production space
- Incubator space/collaboration – share ideas
- Funding model segmented/discipline driver
- Have to store items

AFFORDABLE, SUSTAINABLE, ADAPTABLE, INSPIRING ENVIRONMENT, VISIBILITY

Priorities

1. Affordability / diversity of available space
2. Visibility – AGH Annex e.g. multi-use space
3. Build capacity for the spaces that exist (audience, performance)

ROUND 2

- A) Cobalt Connects space directory - but needs improvement
- B) Many spaces available have inadequate accessibility – washrooms, ramps, doors
- Cheap and available = old and disused
 - Not enough incentives for building owners to make improvements re: accessibility

- Restrictive codes = \$
 - Everyone treated as a developer
- Lack of space on mountain – one venue / cost prohibitive
- C) Look into the use of private homes
- City could have an arts advocate.
 - Someone to connect you with what you need to put on an event. Community Arts Officer.
- City start up projects – one time investment – furnished and a revenue generator (e.g. underground parking) *Self-supporting*
- Portion of event grants for brick and mortar
- D) Many spaces exist in historic buildings, with these come accessibility challenges
- Liaison from City to help identify what improvements can be made – collaborative process
- Incentives are needed to make/support improvements
- MATCHING GRANTS
- Property tax incentives for buildings. Housing not for profits

1. Community development arts officer to assist grass roots organizations to house events – advice and fast-track re: permits/legalities/potential space
2. Flexibility/understanding re: prioritizing upgrades to accessibilities for venues. \$ City to be mindful of challenges that repurposed spaces. Handled differently than developers.
3. Cultural financial sustainability framework (buildings and City incentives need to support culture in part)

ROUND 3

- A) Hamilton formerly had affordable accessible undervalued space for DM creative endeavours
- Less discriminatory – many places won't rent to Artists – perception
 - CAPACITY is there / related to creative industry
 - Theatre – comparatively there are more spaces than 20 years ago – more opportunity
 - Re-appropriation of existing spaces for performance

B) Need for sustainable, flexible theatre space that can meet technical/design needs

*Need for jam spaces/venues/noise friendly spaces

Creative choice versus necessity

C) How to improve

- Open ended, multi-disciplinary space needed – performance

- Keep affordable Artists spaces downtown

D) What real estate does the City available?

What is the plan for Sir John A?

- Consult with Artistic community at the beginning not after the fact

- By-law/zoning re: music

- Need for Arts Hub – perhaps existing City own real estate - City start up but not City run

- City would provide unused land for little \$ should groups fundraise to build

What value does the City place on art? What shall the legacy be?

- What solutions exist? Theatre in the park – City cooperation

- Facility fee waiver (City of Burlington has this – do we?)

- Need for something on the mountain*

ROUND 4

A) Dance studios – shared space capacity
270 Sherman

- Artist run centres – serve many

- ArtCrawl = responsive, community support

- Library – make and present

B) Need a creative space re: 270 Sherman on the mountain

- Need to go to TO for cheap or free rehearsal space

- Need for free / cheap storefront space (a la former Jackson Square)

C) Can City take empty spaces and storefronts and make them affordable?

- City funding/subsidized live/work spaces

- Safety/landlord compliant

- Incentives for landlords to provide space for Artists

- Street pitches

- Breakdown of by-laws re: noise etc.

- Dedicated City employee to help demystify certain event related permit/bylaws etc.

- Roster of Artists available to perform etc

- Roster of spaces

- Need for infrastructure

- Need for bricks and mortar funding

- Promotion of Artists and projects that did receive support

1. Affordable or free spaces – studio shares

2. Diversity/size/street presence. Building capacity for spaces that exist

3. Performance/theatre space

#4 - AUDIENCE OUTREACH (Peter)

ROUND 1

- Social – Main item / overused

- View

- Mailing

- Word of mouth

- On-line – non specific

- Arts Council calendar – need

- Artist should promote Cultural Guide

Working well

- Social works / supplement print

- View – strong support

Not working well

- Social media – not repeatability

- Print

- Online central register

- Print pricing

- Print censorship

What to Improve

- Community Billboard

- Social media cross pollination to new type of arts and audience

Improve

- City could buy advertising space

- City promoting all levels of art

- City programs – drama, writing

- City should be subsidizing – advertising, directories

- Community newspapers do not support

ROUND 2

What is working?

- Art Crawl
- SuperCrawl
- Fringe
- Gage Park / Gore Park
- Social media
- View
- The Spectator
- Hub of the Hammer - website

Not working

- Art Council
- Same old - every Crawl
- Streets open
- Stores not profiting
- Tourism Hamilton
- Slow down traffic
- No one reaching out to new people at
- No empty seats
- Art Crawl website
- The Spectator
- Slow down traffic

ROUND 3

What is working?

- Social meeting
- Social media
- Other events - build - community
- Mini Art Crawl Event
- Preview at other festivals
- Student Outreach
- Co-promotion

What is not Working?

- City website - need major improvement

How can we improve?

- Merge City and HAC website/calendar
- Co-promotion
- Dedicated incubators
- "Street teams" to put out posters and handbills
- Dinner and show packages
- Promote Hamilton Artists worldwide

How City and Artists can work together?

- Dedicated incubators/person to promote
- Make billboards available
- Reduce taxes for restaurants and bars that promote art
- Develop App for Artists
- New companies support arts
- *Access to Councillors to promote arts
- Art Crawl worldwide - Sister Cities

ROUND 4

Working?

- Partnership and collaborations with other group

Not Working?

- Poor coordination - is it promoted
- Minimal outreach to mag

How to improve?

- Teach people - business skills
- Art company development group
- Do a real ROI on Arts Funding and Support
- Common database shared by City to all art groups
- Re-educate art audience cause young folk ain't coming
- Look at training Artists in business training
- Better out bound transit
- Free transit for art ticket holders
- Transit stop advertising
- Transit vehicle inside advertising
- City arts event marketing
- If you use arts to promote, promote Artists as well.

From post-it notes:

- Quality/Quantity of performance
 - Not outstripping the audience base
 - Ensuring local artists a place in their city

#5 - ARTS EVENTS (Ray)

ROUND 1

What is working?

- SuperCrawl a) diversity of art and people b) wide audience
- Street festivals and open streets
- Funding for arts events
- Multi-events - year round
- Hamilton Music Festival
- Jazz Fest. And smaller events

- AGH/Aquarius/Fringe/Frost Bite
- Smaller spaces
- Community news (View)
- Social Media
- ED Facilities Support (eg Mohawk and McMaster)
- Public Art

What is not working?

- Aspects of SuperCrawl (too many food trucks)
- Not enough corporate funding (City not doing **ILLEGIBLE**)
- Generational/Cultural appreciation development
- Coordination across City of Hamilton
- Not enough Attention performing arts (Imbalance)
- City doesn't promote the arts enough
- Still not enough funding for small events
- Understanding of changing demographics
- Gore Park theme and consulting
- Transit for events
- Parking

How to improve

- More leadership coordination
- Big Picture
- Ambassadors to facility, City requirement
- Communication about the arts - inter-arts and external
- Multi-year arts funding commitment
- More focus on art than its role as Economic engine
- Accessibility to events especially parking
- Policy on acceptance of music sound levels
- Communication between the public and the Arts Council
- Free transit to events - shuttles, visitor parking
- Annual visual art event
- Local spaces for local Artists
- Utilities access

How to Work Together

- Have municipal politicians actually listen to arts community - e.g. "Big Picture"
- More understanding/flexibility by City to arts events
- Lenience for Artists re: Public space (eg spontaneous event in a park vs permits - user guidelines)
- Use neighbourhood associations to help
- More funding - for big and small events

- More weight to cross generational and cross cultural

ROUND 2

What is working?

- Art Crawl (Super? Less so)
- Arts are bringing Downtown - a destination (works for everybody)
- Fringe - Frostbite
- Grass root initiatives
- Public Art
- Gage Park events

What is not working?

- Theme change to Gore Park - away from improv, music
- Consultation?
- SuperCrawl - exclusion of existing arts community
- Lack of transit opportunities / Integration for an event

How to improve?

- Free public transit / parking for events (shuttling)
- Designated spaces in neighbourhoods for local Artists
- Annual events for visual arts
- Affordability of space for presentations

Working together - City and Arts Community

- Red tape limits - permitting for events
- Make zoning less restrictive
- "Ambassadors" to explain how to navigate arts opportunities
- Facilitate event Licensing / permits (economic + red tape)
- Facilitate City utilities provisions for events

HANDWRITTEN NOTES

What's working:

- Supercrawl/Art Crawls
- Attracting diverse attention to a broad spectrum of events and audiences, talent and artist from street corners to professionals
- Diversity of art and people
- All ages and stages
- How wide the geographic range of the audience is
- Open Streets - Locke Street/Ottawa Street/Street festivals
- Increased arts funding for arts events

- Multi-events year round
- Hamilton Music Festival
- Jazz Festival and smaller events
- HPO/Theatre Aquarius
- Smaller spaces need to be funded
- Community newspapers
- Social media
- Mohawk College/McMaster Music Dept. Live Labl
 - education facilitates support
- Funding for arts events

What's Not Working

- Supercrawl
 - Moving more to a street festival, more food trucks the focus than art - too commercial
 - Too little visual arts
- City not done enough to attract corporate funding
- Cultivating an appreciation and understanding of the arts
 - Embedded in the community
- Coordination and timing of cultural events too many time conflicts
- Accessibility to events - free parking for street festivals
 - Supercrawl / Gage Park
- Noise complaints for outdoor music events
- Policies on music sound levels - patio music
- Communications between public
- Greater communication between arts community and arts orgs

City/Arts Working Together

- Better communication
- More municipal politicians coming out to events like this to listen to what the community is saying
- Be more lenient and flexible by the City re: arts events
- Lenient bylaws for spontaneous arts events
- Have guidelines that will facilitate spontaneous arts events vs. permits
- Better use of neighbourhood associations to help organize and facilitate/funding
- Funding - increased funding for the CEF for big and small/intergenerational requests/cross cultural

#6 - Art in Public Spaces (Pam)

ROUND 1

What is working well?

- Art produced by Hamilton Artists

What is not working well?

- Need commissioning work in public buildings (hospitals, banks) building the reputation of Hamilton Artists
- Need community art; having Public Art City staff allied, ie facilitator.
- Providing access to public space.
- Integrated public art
- Media exposure

Hot to improve?

- Juries; how can you use opportunities as also capacity building?
- \$ public art calls have build capacity
- How do local Artists develop capacity to be in a position to create/apply for \$500,000+ commissions?
- What do capacity building opportunities look like
- Workshops (topics: hot to pitch to private sector, how to sell work, consultation workshop with City and Developers - how to reply to RFP, call for Artists)
- Participant in public art jury
- * public art program helping Artists build their name
- City giving more time to annual plan for public art Call for Artists. Map of opportunities
- City to facilitate integrated art in private sector and public (eg University) properties
- Is there a way to allow dispensations (use of public spaces) access for creative uses?
- Recognizing James St. N. as "Official Arts District"

Top 3 Priorities

1. Building Hamilton Artists capacity to respond successfully to RFP/Call for Artists - \$100K+
2. Map of opportunities (ie integrated art, functional art (creative consultation with staff in all departments)
3. More entry level opportunities (community and temp, use of City owned spaces)
4. Communication and marketing capacity (project management)

ROUND 2

What is working?

- Public Art Master Plan Completion
- SuperCrawl - art installations
- Direction to placemaking - artwork piece takes into account where/history not "plop" art
- Greater profile on acceptance on diversity of artworks

What is not working?

- Public art "unexpected" less common types of spaces (off beaten track) more variety in spaces

How to improve?

- More disciplines (beyond visual art) to be represented. We mostly see visual/sculptural; let's see performance and differing perceptions of public art by collaborating with other kinds of Artists
- More communication and presence so people know what is out there
- Examine "roster" of gate keepers: who is not at the table and how can we get them there?
- More communication and presence so people know what is out there
- More integration of Artists in the public realm ... ways to access and meet Artists into community. Artist use of public space in community.
- Artists in residence (across all hubs for example) engaging community
- A change up at the head of the table eg. Diversity
- Interactive tools to access art and info re: art
- How can we leverage work from other cities to promote good work at home

Working together - City and Arts Community

- Policy and plans re: temporary art: how long up for, movement etc.
- Graffiti: what it is and isn't, best practices: policy and plans.
- Collaborate between City and community - open collaboration eg. Artist run centre, performance
- Artists Led Teams - as leader as opposed to responder
- Community members as stakeholders (not just consumers). Community members at the table as part of the decision making process

- Programs that build the capacity to respond to calls to enhance collaboration (limiting to residents of Hamilton)

Top 3 Priorities

1. Artist in residence (specific re: collaboration, community engagement - City as part of Artists team)
2. Re-distribution and re-assessment of the agency of who is at the HEAD of the table of art in the public realm + openness of transparency re: communicating
3. More opportunities: difference spaces, different kinds of calls etc.

ROUND 3

What is working?

- Parks - places for artistic expression, programming, community hub, collaboration (colour-coded (for age) activity 'tool boxes)
- Working - consistent budget, process

What is not working?

- Recreation programs - no sustainability in centres, instructor turnover
- Important to create spaces of identity within the City - could be improved upon eg. Westdale, James St. N., Ottawa St.)
- Building public art with real connection

How to improve?

- Incorporating in integrated design cultural spaces in park development - integrate these into recreation facilities
- Playground equipment - could be public art instead of 'cookie cutter' equipment that we have (eg. Parks in London, ON)
- Integrated public art - % of development fees for building
- Vision; educate the Artist what the vision is about - timeline
- Need for a curatorial vision for various programs as opposed to place making or site specific
- Variety in public art places
- Public art should be incorporated into redevelopment of waterfront - maintain budgets for this

Working together - City and Arts Community

- Better coordination with City department when new infrastructure installed
- Support for Artists in RFP process for Art in Public Spaces - pre-meeting with Artists to identify resources, building capacity in process.
- Coordination with departments - is cultural garden staying or being ripped out

Top 3 Priorities

1. Other types of 'Crawls' - Art Crawl works well for one are - visual arts
2. Garden beds - Could be used for artistic spaces - Other public spaces that could be used for public art besides the 'usual suspects'
3. Pieces genuinely tied to community. City supports the Artist-led team, Artists / or community wants to have piece of public art

Handwritten Notes (all sessions merged)

- Media disconnect keeps coming up as an issue (top of page)

What is working well:

- Keeping commissioning in-house (Hamilton-based artists)
- Works for commercial buildings - public spaces
- Helps to build local artist names
- That there is a contact in the City to run ideas by, facilitate projects, help to access public space (go-to person for artists)
- Art in functioning spaces - "integrated art"
- Rejuvenation of public art opportunities - more calls, opportunities
- Contribution of events exposing public to art in public spaces - ex. Supercrawl
- Direction to placemaking in the calls for submissions of public art
- Greater profile on acceptance of the diversity of art

What is not working well:

- Media disconnect - not being picked up by local media
- Not enough expertise in community on how to put together RFPs, how to follow through to presentation stage

- How do we get artistic community to apply outside of city, build capacity
- Bridging gap between smaller projects in Hamilton - artists using these to build the skills they need to apply for larger \$ projects
- Art in unexpected spaces - most art is in the usual places ex. Plazas, parks, etc.
- Not representational of all artistic disciplines
 - not just visual arts - ex. Performance pieces, etc. - widening definition of public art
- Limited pool of gatekeepers - who is on juries, panels, committees, etc.

How can we improve?

- Maybe the Arts Council could take on workshops on applying for public art commissions - it can be intimidating for artists to do this
 - Support on facilitation to the process
- More presence, communication
- More artists presence in the community - visible outside of downtown core
- City - could they establish an artist in residence program - could work with community in process
- Policies and plans in respect to temporary art
- Open up the roster for jury panels, committees, etc. so we don't have the same people sitting at all the tables
- Communication tools - ex. City of Mississauga has an app for public art

City/Arts Community Working Together:

- Artists would benefit from more lead time for what projects are coming up - allowing artists to better organize themselves
- Encouraging private institutions to put out calls for submissions - perhaps the City can work with these larger institutions to encourage public art - putting out calls
- City of Toronto did a public art workshop on how you would put together RFP package
- Can we designate certain spaces as arts districts - ex. James St. N.
- Looking at collaborations between City of Hamilton and other groups, ex. Artist run centres
- Artist leading work being created
- Treating people in community as stakeholders in process

- Building capacity of artists to respond to calls for submission
 - By limited some calls to local artists

3 Priorities

1. Building Hamilton artists capacity to respond successfully to RFPs, Calls for Submissions
2. Map of opportunities - ex. Submission date map
3. More entry level opportunities
 - a. Access to City own spaces
 - b. Creative consultation
4. Marketing workshops for artists, time/project management, etc.

3 Priorities (Group 2)

1. Artist in Residence in Public Art Program
2. Redistributing process and who is at the table - head of the table specifically
3. Transparency of process, "communication of process"
4. More opportunities - different spaces, types of calls for submissions

From Post-It Notes:

- Should be more selective, some of the murals on the board are "not good"
- Encourage more grassroots, resident-led, community-based art
- Classical music being broadcast in Gore Park. Always loud canned music. How can we educate the young to develop the love for classical music if we don't "pollute" them like it does with the hip-hop, jazz etc.
- Community arts initiatives (performance based)

#7 - Cultural Diversity (Anne)

Round 1

Diversity

- Mediums
- Opportunities
- Working to promote awareness in communities
- Continuing to question the word

What is working?

- There is room
- Range of experiences
- Voices of the privileged white community are easier heard
- Growth potential for events and festivals

What is not working?

- 25% cannot afford to engage
- Not enough grant funding for specific arts
- Minorities don't see themselves represented (Aboriginal, Black community)
- Most activities are in the downtown core
- Funding is structured toward academic and privileged applicants
- More room and grounding is needed for emerging Artists
- More education and representation for minorities
- Fashion has been excluded thus far
- Making art a normal part of life in communities is lacking

Improvement

- Where does it happen / where do we access art?
- How do we design the grant application process to include all? (- more honest, - without the same organizations applying and getting the grants?)
- Application process to be less academic, and more conversational
- Not having a top-down approach
- Fashion/designer application grants are missing (left out, Canada 150 not including Aboriginal input, no individual Artists funding availability)
- Creatives are made to fit in boxes of grant process (only a % of funding available, consultation with Artists about funding and process)
- Individual Artists are not included
- Bottom-up approach more important

Priorities

• Funding model

- **Specific festivals** (eg. Aboriginal/minority festivals) to be at forefront with Aboriginal communities leading it.
- Deeper engagement
- Deeper commitment to seeking out Artists input
- More consultation and engagement
- Keep communication lines open

- Highlight the depth of all artistic community, especially minority groups
- Community participation needs to be acknowledged
- The ones not being represented need to be at the table
- **The AAC needs to be more culturally diverse**
- Identify breath of arts community and its leadership and involve them
- Targeted representation

Round 2

What is working?

- World Music festival is an asset in Hamilton
- Diversified culture in the City and its awareness
- Immigrant organizations giving voices to newcomers
- The City's support in accepting refugees plays a huge part
- Arts education seems diverse
- Diversity seems to be from grass roots level
 - More impactful
 - Some of it with room for improvement
- Diverse groups seem active in communities
- We're starting to acknowledge the cultural land
 - More common now and less surprising

What is not working?

- Funding model geared towards majority groups
 - Only 30% towards arts
 - Self-perpetuating
- Grants are too academic
 - Voices are missed of minority and uneducated groups
- Structure does not reflect diversity

Improvements

- Perhaps a multi-level system to represent all groups
- Ask the established groups for help
- City Enrichment fund to go through Arts Council
- Mountain brow communities are not being reached

Priorities for Improvement

- Transparency
- Opportunities for easier access
- Communication

- Broader base of individuals
- Being proactive and going out to communities
- Divide between downtown and mountain and so on
- Taking leadership role to changing things
- Taking information out to communities
- Advertise City events more broadly
- Linguistic barriers. Not enough communication with diverse groups

From Post-It Notes:

- Cultural diversity is represented *not just white young hipsters
- How do we ensure that "diversity" is more than all talk with no substance?
- Find ways to represent broader cultural diversity. Prioritize art from under-represented communities
- Is there room for emerging arts/artists? The trial and even error?

#8 - GEOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES (Anne)

ROUND 1

- Hamilton and GHA seems like two cities (the downtown and up the mountain)
- Mountain councillors seem to be partial in view: us vs them
- How do we embrace vastness of Hamilton's diversity
- Urban/rural conversation
- Idea: multiple identities of Hamilton
- Transit/quality of access plays a big part
- Sense of fear to get to downtown core

What's working well?

- Mountain/downtown are interestingly different
- Attitudes about getting downtown are changing
- ArtCrawl/SuperCrawl are busier now
- Cultural events gets people out eg. Students, out of town, encouraged by teachers.

What's not working?

- Public transit
- Cultural spaces to be walked create conduits
- Defined pockets of cultural spaces: Stoney Creek, Dundas, etc (How do we connect all?)
- Concession Street could use artistic events etc.
- More arts on the mountain
- Cultural hubs/community centres on the mountain

- More affordable studio spaces like the Cotton Factory are lacking
- Lacking more free transit to cultural events (eg universities to theatre production, with proof of purchase)
- Increasing collecting data of transit usage with attending cultural events/spaces like theatre
- History of the City does not include the founding fathers/mothers of the land
 - Needs to be a foundation of our conversations
 - We don't talk about the origins enough
- Where in the City did civilization begin?
- Voices of the communities are not equal due to political and geographical boundaries
- All voices are equal whether artistic or not

Priorities

- Create cultural spaces on mountain and rural areas
- Create better understanding of link between transit and cultural activities/space with objective to improve and increase access to culture
- Redefine the City in terms of its cultural origin rather than current communities
- Revisit ward boundaries with the aim to equal say in influence

ROUND 2

Not Working?

- Huge divide between the mountain, lower Hamilton and GHA
- The GHA does not communicate with each other
- Public transit a challenge in moving people to and from downtown core
 - Not on a bus route
 - Can be expensive
- Arts events happen in downtown mostly
- Lack of communication and lack of engagement

What is working?

- Neighbourhoods have their own identity and cultural knowledge
- Developing a cultural map of the City, including outskirts like Stoney Creek, Flamborough, etc. and celebrating culture and diversity
- Active and active BIA's are well known and engage
- Innovation Park's doing well in displaying Artists work

Improvements

- Being able to post in/around City Hall to inform public of events
- Becoming more active on social media
- More forums like this one
 - Opportunities to share with a focus
- Art communities to have opportunities to get together more regularly
- Online forums/suggestion boxes for artistic communities
- Transit: more regular, connected times

How do we work together?

- More funding for arts and culture
- More discussion
- Add postal codes to registration for next event
- Meetings more frequently
- What do we want to achieve?
- Who needs/wants to be at the table and the watercoolers?
- Identify good leadership to take suggestions forward.
- Keep updating everyone
- More engagement

From Post-It Notes:

- Crossing the divide of the escarpment. It goes both ways.
- Getting people living on the mountain to come downtown for arts events



Hamilton



ARTS ADVISORY COMMISSION

