

## Regina Arts and Culture Topic Sheet

### Overview: our arts and culture scene

Arts and culture are a valuable part of our society. They represent our traditions, beliefs and languages. They inspire celebration, creative production and cultural literacy. The arts include visual, literary and theatrical arts, music, dance, film and video, and multidisciplinary collaboration. Culture is often associated with preserving and celebrating one's heritage and ethnicity. Related creative industries involve the production of art in such areas as publishing, architecture, advertising, design, crafts, performance, fashion, broadcasting, new media, spoken word and sound recording.

### Relevance to the Design Regina process

Arts and culture form the foundation of a vibrant, sustainable community. Active cultural planning helps retain youth, attract newcomers and foster pride. A robust creative industry not only enhances our city's quality of life, but also provides employment, stimulates the economy and connects individuals and communities. As Regina grows into a major Canadian centre, defining its cultural priorities will help our city achieve its full potential.

Regina is projected to grow by more than 50,000 people over the next 25 years, with immigration being a key factor in that growth. This influx of newcomers presents a tremendous opportunity to enhance the richness of Regina's culture. Preparing to provide a supportive environment that encourages the sharing of traditions, food, arts and language is an important planning consideration.

### At issue

#### Highlights:

- The City of Regina established the Regina Arts Commission in 1978
- The Neil Balkwill Civic Arts Centre was established in 1982
- A Civic Arts Collection Policy was established in 1983
- In 1993 the Municipal Arts Policy established an overall vision for arts in Regina. It also provided a 1% for art policy goal.
- In 1998 a cultural policy framework defined Regina's cultural categories
- In 2004 the City of Regina was named the Cultural Capital of Canada
- In 2011 Regina began Phase I of its cultural planning process

Regina has more artists and creative industries per capita than any other Saskatchewan city. Numerous provincial arts organizations are centred in Regina, and the province recently announced its intention to highlight Regina as a cultural capital.

Our city is rich in heritage and home to a diverse range of galleries and museums, including the Saskatchewan Science Centre, the MacKenzie Art Gallery, the RCMP Heritage Museum, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, and the Plains Historical Museum.

We also boast professional music, dance and film companies, including the Canada Saskatchewan Sound Stage, the Globe Theatre, the Regina Symphony Orchestra, the Connexus Arts Centre, the Performing Arts Centre and the Neil Balkwill Civic Centre.

Our community celebrates its culture through the many annual events such as Regina Folk Festival, MOSAIC, First Nations University of Canada Pow Wow, Cathedral Village Arts Festival, the Regina Symphony Orchestra festival in the park, the Mid Winter Blues Festival and the Fire and Ice Winter Festival.

The City of Regina owns 300 pieces of art, featured in civic buildings throughout our city. The collection reflects our history and marks our public places with sculptures, murals, gateways and visual art.

*Issues:*

Aging infrastructure, a quickly expanding city and evolving art forms are just some of the unique challenges facing Regina's arts and culture scene. New media and social networking are changing the way people experience museum exhibits, art galleries and performances.

As our population grows, more and more people are attending Regina's festivals. This presents a tremendous opportunity for cultural growth but also places strain on existing facilities and public places. Another challenge facing Regina is the lack of performing arts space in the downtown area. Restoring or expanding this infrastructure will require careful planning and open communication with the community.

It is also important to consider arts funding structures, the availability of arts education and other programs important to the development of art literacy as part of the Design Regina planning process.

Arts and culture is important to Regina's ongoing prosperity as culturally vibrant cities attract youth, immigrants and creative industries.

## **Current initiatives**

The City of Regina, Community Services Department is currently involved in the following Culture and Cultural Planning initiatives:

### *Recreation Master Plan*

This plan outlines two facility enhancement priorities. In Phase I, the city will renew the Regina Performing Arts Centre and assist with the ongoing capital and programming needs of this north central community site. In Phase II, the city will address the needs of the Balkwill Civic Arts Centre.

### *Community Investment Review*

The City of Regina currently provides \$800,000 a year in program grant assistance to over 35 arts organizations ranging from the MacKenzie Art Gallery to the Regina Bell Ringers. The review will align this funding with Regina's strategic objectives and streamline the application process.

### *Cultural Plan*

The city recently began the first phase of a three phase cultural plan that will define its role and priorities in developing Regina's cultural assets. This phase includes an audit and analysis of these assets, as well as the development of cultural map and environmental scan of Regina's existing cultural scene.

## **For consideration**

- How can we plan to support arts and culture in Regina?
- How can Regina welcome and retain immigrants?
- Do we provide adequate support and resources to cultural groups and activities?
- How is your quality of life enhanced by Regina's cultural assets?