

RENEW INVESTMENT IN OTTAWA'S CULTURAL CAPITAL NOW



Ottawa's cultural sector contributes greatly to our city's economy and our enviable quality of life.

We're halfway through the City's current, unanimously approved six-year 2013-2018 Cultural Action Plan. Here is where we stand:

- 90% of Canadians believe arts and culture make communities better places to live
- Yet, **City of Ottawa's per capita investments in its local cultural sector remain 31% below other major cities' average.** The City's investment is \$7.22 compared to the major cities average of \$10.50 as of 2013. Ottawa is behind by \$3.28 per person.
- **Of the \$4.955 million Action Plan goal, only 22% (\$1.1 million)** of planned investments in base operating funding are in place.
- A long list of initiatives have not yet begun. **\$3.85 million (or 78% of planned investments) are outstanding. No new funding is yet in place for the next three years 2016-18.**
- Grateful that important new facilities are underway, however with limited resources to program them.
- 2017 will not be an average year. It is Canada's 150th birthday and the world will come to Ottawa. **With no new resources for our cultural sector, we won't be adequately resourced to leverage other investments and fully take part in the celebrations.**

Investments in culture make sense.

- Cultural activity is acknowledged as a strong and efficient economic generator and the City now funds over 300 arts and heritage groups, festivals and artists annually.
- The City's own research shows the leveraging power of investments into community organizations: **\$1 generates between \$6 and \$12 from other revenue sources via the private sector, sales and other levels of funding. Lower City funding means less economic impact.**
- The City of Ottawa has shown leadership and made important capital contributions to realize the important cultural facilities currently under construction
- Invest Ottawa and Ottawa Tourism cite cultural assets as reasons to do business in/visit Ottawa
- Ottawa's cultural work force: 4.7% of jobs in Ottawa - 1 in 20 jobs are in culture
- Creative people are entrepreneurs who drive innovation...and yet, we struggle. Artists' earnings are 54% below average Ontarians and non-profits operate close to the line.
- Cultural presence is revitalizing our neighbourhoods, e.g. Hintonburg

Here is what can be done about it.

1) Honour the plan and unfreeze funding

The cultural sector has spoken. At an October 26, 2015 Ottawa Cultural Alliance meeting, close to 100 members unanimously endorsed maintaining the integrity of the Action Plan. We want culture to be a vibrant part of our city's present and future. The Action Plan should remain intact and get back on track.

We strongly urge City Council to ensure the incremental base operating investments remain intact as outlined in the Plan by commencing with an investment of \$1,283,000 in the 2016 budget. (Amounts cited below are for planned investments over six years).

- Renewed arts, heritage, festival and fair operating investment – \$ 2M
- Community cultural facility capital fund – \$1.5 M
- Cultural facility operating funding – \$900K
- Cultural development initiatives – \$250K
- Get the word out about local culture – \$150K
- Poet laureate program – \$25K
- Neighbourhood cultural initiatives – \$100K
- Cultural summit (federal/local) – \$30K

2) Work in collaboration with the cultural sector

Continue to work with Ottawa's cultural sector to help steer the plan and give our community regular Action Plan status updates. Over 425 stakeholders helped to develop the 6 year plan in 2012.

3) Get ready for 2017

Work with your arts, heritage and cultural constituents now to plan a successful 2017.

About the Ottawa Cultural Alliance

The **Ottawa Cultural Alliance** works collaboratively to strategically address shared opportunities and challenges to further advance the success of Ottawa's cultural sector. The Alliance comprises umbrella organizations that have over 800 members across the City and collectively serve as the voice for this vibrant sector, including: AOE Arts Council, Council of Heritage Organizations in Ottawa (CHOO|COPO), Heritage Ottawa, Ottawa Arts Council, Ottawa Festivals and Ottawa Museum Network. www.cultureottawa.ca



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Sources:

1. Canada Council for the Arts research
2. City of Ottawa provided research for 2013: The top seven major Canadian municipalities average \$10.50 per capita in cultural spending. Ottawa at \$7.22, is lower than Vancouver at \$17.44, Montreal at \$13.82, Edmonton at \$12.80 and Toronto at \$9.17.

Dated: November 10, 2015