

NEWSLETTER 2

MARCH 2010

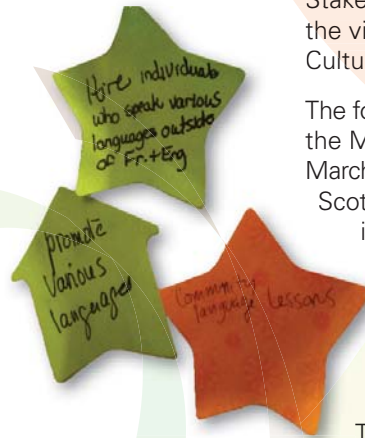
To kick-off Phase II of the development of the Saskatoon Culture Plan, a major consultation event was held for over 100 key stakeholders at TCU Place on March 4 and 5, 2010. The outcomes of this forum will inform the completion of Phase II, which aims to identify specific directions for the Culture Plan.

CULTURAL STAKEHOLDERS PLANNING FORUM

March 4 & 5, 2010
TCU Place, Saskatoon

The Cultural Stakeholders Planning Forum was a resounding success. Attended by well over 100 stakeholders comprised of representatives from arts and cultural organizations, and including educational institutions, individual artists, architects, planners, students and community leaders, the Forum served to be a most active and engaging major consultation event and key moment in the development of the Culture Plan.

This event was designed to introduce the project to stakeholders and to provide an opportunity to collaborate.



Stakeholders took the reins by generating big ideas about the vision, principles, and key policy directions for the Culture Plan.

The forum featured an enthusiastic greeting from His Worship the Mayor Donald Atchison, who opened the evening of March 4. Lively musical Métis entertainment by Faye Maurice, Scott Duffie and Mel Vandale transformed the atmosphere in TCU Place to one of celebration and excitement. To introduce the project, Jennifer Keesmaat of Office for Urbanism began with an introductory presentation on the Culture Plan purpose and process. This presentation was followed by one on the Cultural Drivers in Saskatoon by Reid Henry of Office for Urbanism.

The nine Cultural Drivers for Change (see page 4) are key factors or forces in Saskatoon that are an outcome of stakeholder interviews held to begin the cultural planning process late in 2009. They were used as a "conversation tool" to kick start discussions at the Forum. Conversations on other areas of cultural development in Saskatoon were shaped during the 'interactive panel' sessions where participants were asked to respond to questions on culture through the process of 'dotmocracy'.

Jennifer Keesmaat introduces the Saskatoon Culture Plan at TCU Place



Interactive Panel Session through dotmocracy



Interactive Panel Session through dotmocracy



Panel Hosts report back their panel outcomes to the stakeholders





Panel outcomes

At the end of the evening, each panel facilitator identified interesting trends and observations as outcomes of their conversations. Nine interactive panels were marked up with detailed responses - ideas, questions, comments, and solutions - which will be used to directly inform the Culture Plan.

Equipped with a clear understanding of the Culture Plan objectives and ideas generated in this evening workshop, participants left eager to begin their group work the next day.

AN EMERGING VISION FOR THE CULTURE PLAN

On March 5 participants returned to begin working on the articulation of their ideas for the Culture Plan. The day began graciously with a drumming performance by Joseph Naytowhow who led a morning sing-along to a Métis song he had composed. (Joseph also participated as a key stakeholder in the workshops.)

We value an atmosphere that supports creative risk-taking.

In the morning workshop, participants were asked to generate statements beginning with 'We value', as an exercise towards creating the vision for the Culture Plan. In total, over 100 'We value' statements were generated, some of which are showcased here. These statements set the tone for the conversations to be had for the rest of the day.

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Jennifer Keesmaat introduces the format for day 2 of the forum

We value the river as a force in creating and shaping the past, present and future of our city and our people.

The afternoon workshop focused on identifying five Big Moves – major ideas or priorities – that the Culture Plan should consider, and that were in keeping with the values and principles that were generated in the morning workshop. This was a challenging task, given that the morning was focused on conversing on a myriad of ideas. Participants and facilitators alike had to focus to narrow their discussions to select just five Big Moves.

We value the expression of culture in all aspects of our daily lives.

To summarize the work by each group, facilitators were asked to complete a large chart whereby the groups' vision (or value statements), principles (that emerged from the vision), and Big Moves were identified. This helped to further focus on the salient points of their discussions.

We value the natural heritage and its inherent value for our community.

At the end of the day, each group presented their charts to the larger group. Hearing all groups illustrated several common themes: the desire for integrating a cultural lens in community planning; emphasizing culture in education; creating a walkable, accessible, and sustainable city; establishing networks for mentorship; elevating tourism; better celebrating the natural and built heritage; and new ideas for governance and partnerships.

Stakeholders worked in groups to create the vision for the Culture Plan



Stakeholders worked in groups to create the vision for the Culture Plan





University of Saskatchewan students report back on their group work



Facilitators worked with their stakeholders to identify five Big Moves

EMERGING PRINCIPLES FOR THE CULTURE PLAN

The principles generated have been distilled into the following six, which seek to capture the breadth of the ideas proposed by the working groups.

1. Accessible, Inclusive and Visible

We seek to ensure our culture is accessible to all and includes forms of expression that connect us to our past, point us towards a shared future, and are visible in everyday life.

2. Connected and Integrative

We seek to build connections through our approaches to the administration of municipal government, in our land use planning, and by seeking partnerships across sectors, generations, disciplines and narratives.

3. Lifelong

We seek, through our decision making and planning today, to create cultural legacies that will continue to inspire and guide us generation after generation.

4. Sustainable

We seek to foster a culture that respects our natural environment by building upon the uniqueness of our prairie landscape and river setting.

5. Diverse

We seek to embrace innovation through the continued and increasing flourishing of our entrepreneurial traditions, and to celebrate and support cultural and economic diversity.

Stakeholders reviewed the outcomes of all the groups as a finale to day 2 of the Forum



6. Leadership, mentorship, and participation

We seek to nurture a culture of community leaders who mentor and encourage others to participate in defining who we are through cultural initiatives.

NEXT STEPS

A plethora of inspiring and substantive ideas were generated at the Forum, at varying levels of detail, exceeding expectations. This will allow the consultant team to move forward with some confidence as they identify the specific considerations for the Culture Plan.

We value the diversity of culture that provides opportunities for shared experiences across age groups, gender and ethnic backgrounds.

To begin organizing the ideas into a useful form for the Culture Plan, the ideas will be transcribed, consolidated, and posted on the project website. An interim report of the project will also be posted on the website in late-April 2010.

Over the spring and summer months, Office for Urbanism will work closely with the City, the Steering Committee, and the Advisory Committee to organize the ideas

generated and begin drafting the framework for the Culture Plan. This will include a focussed workshop with senior City staff and a meeting with City Council.

The next major stakeholder consultation event is expected to be held in the fall of 2010, where the outcomes of the detailed work and the draft Culture Plan will be presented for feedback.

NINE CULTURAL DRIVERS

These are key factors or forces in Saskatoon that were identified through background analysis, in order to shape the conversation at the Forum.

1. Sustaining partnerships

Propelling culture's role in city-building requires partnerships.

Saskatoon's dynamic cultural environment requires equally innovative leadership by the municipality to bring arts and cultural policy in from the margins to add value and generate new opportunities across the City's social and economic development agendas.

2. Pursuing policy alignment

Fostering sustainable arts and culture organizations requires better policy alignment and coordination among government, agencies and institutions.

A more coordinated and cooperative approach by the City and its government partners to enable the sector's organizational capacity and resiliency can result in more clearly defined roles, improved leveraging of investment and greater synergy.

3. Shifting demographics

Attracting flows of people, ideas and investment to Saskatoon requires responsiveness to the shifting demographics of the city.

The city's ability to attract and retain young, creative people in an extremely competitive environment requires a more strategic approach to cultivating the breadth and depth of Saskatoon's cultural offer and opportunities for creative enterprise and urban quality of life.

4. Cultivating connections with the University of Saskatchewan

Positioning Saskatoon as a leading edge creative city requires fostering deep connections with the University of Saskatchewan.

Cultivating new synergies and intersections across the University's academic disciplines and bridging relationships throughout the city provides an immense opportunity for innovation and engagement.

5. Capturing tourism potential

Accelerating Saskatoon's tourism potential requires stronger linkages among the city's distinctive cultural assets to generate critical mass.

Capitalizing on Saskatoon's cultural tourism potential requires a campaign of ideas that drive storytelling on a civic scale. It is less about specific iconic attractions than it is about an immersive experience of 'place'.

6. Culture in neighbourhood planning

Successful community revitalization in Saskatoon requires elevating culture's role in the life of its neighbourhoods and downtown.

An opportunity exists to explore more deeply the different parts of the planning process for which culture can have a positive and essential influence at the neighbourhood and district level.

7. Building on "Creative Hubs"

Enabling greater participation in cultural activity across the city requires leveraging civic and community institutions as accessible, creative hubs.

Thinking about libraries, community centres and schools as multi-functional hubs connected to the broader cultural landscape of the city provides an opportunity to generate immense dividends for community well-being.

8. Celebrating Many Cultures

Creating opportunities for interaction and exchange among Saskatoon's many cultures requires a focus on cultivating more inclusive platforms for community engagement.

In partnership with the City, there is a key role for cultural institutions and programs to facilitate dialogue, exchange and reciprocal understanding between people of different cultural backgrounds.

9. An emerging but strong economy

Ensuring Saskatoon's future generations can compete in an emerging creative economy requires diverse pathways for learning.

From community arts to cultural industries, connecting young people to this emerging opportunity requires a broader understanding of the different pathways through which they become engaged in creative activities. No one organization can meet all the needs of a young person – it requires community-wide stewardship and a collaborative effort between the creative and education sectors.

CONTACT US!

<http://www.saskatoon.ca>
(See "c" for Culture Plan)

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