Toward a Creative City Strategy for Saskatoon

Radisson Hotel – Saskatoon
June 24, 2008

Organized by Tourism Saskatoon in Partnership with the City of Saskatoon – Community Development Branch

TourismSaskatoon

Gathering Overview

On June 24, 2008, Tourism Saskatoon in partnership with the City of Saskatoon's Community Development Branch hosted the Toward a Creative City Strategy for Saskatoon Forum. The Forum was the culmination of the work of the Cultural Governance component of the Cultural Capitals Building Cultural Bridges Project.

A group of over 60 participants spent the day at the Radisson Hotel discussing the meaning of creativity and creative city building in Saskatoon. What follows is a summary of what was presented and discussed at this one day Forum. These notes, and indeed the session itself, contribute to an impressive body of literature generated by the various Cultural Capital of Canada projects. It is within this context that the Toward a Creative City Strategy for Saskatoon Forum can help point the way toward the future development of culture and creative city building in Saskatoon.

About the Gathering: Objectives

The objective of the forum was to gather representatives from municipal government, the arts, cultural and heritage sectors, the business community and other interested residents and individuals to discuss how the arts and culture can contribute to creative city building, and how the intersection between the arts, culture, business and creativity can be nurtured. The forum began with a plenary session with presentations from Todd Brandt of Tourism Saskatoon, Dr. Terry Rock, President & CEO of Calgary Arts Development Authority Ltd, Saskatoon musician Carrie Catherine Horachek , Julio Torres of Folkfest 2008 and Colleen Fitzgerald, Director of Educational Media Access and Production at the University of Saskatchewan. The Plenary was followed by smaller discussion groups that were facilitated in such a way so as to explore the benefits of a creative city strategy for Saskatoon, to identify ideal characteristics of a Creative City and how to ensure collaboration across the various creative sectors.

What was Heard

The plenary session began with a welcome address from His Worship Mayor Donald Atchison and was followed by four speakers; each presenting the creative aspects of their work in their individual sectors.

The first plenary speaker was Todd Brandt, of Tourism Saskatoon, who presented the achievements of the former Creative Connections Roundtable, the Cultural Tourism Strategy and The Crescent initiative, all projects of the Cultural Capitals Program

Dr. Terry Rock, President and CEO of Calgary Arts Development Authority Limited then presented the vision, framework for action and the achievements of the Calgary Arts Development Authority Limited to date. Dr. Rock stated that the vision for a creative city should reflect the kind of place *we* want to live in and that it is imperative to have "structured leadership, environments and incubators that are stable, he also stressed the importance of partnerships between tourism, arts and the City. Rock explained Calgary, as a city, is a living work of art. Calgary strives to be a culturally vibrant city that inspires and engages the community. Rock also raised the issues of engagement and inclusiveness and how it is important that everyone be involved. It is also important to develop shared values.

Dr. Rock concluded the Forum with a few final observations:

1. Find examples of what is working and invest in those
2. Champion successes and potential successes
3. Engage communities
4. Using all of your own energy is a sign of moving forward
5. Continue to encourage the involvement of Mayor and city councillors
6. Participation is imperative

Carrie Catherine Horachek then spoke of the status of the artist in Saskatoon. Carrie mentioned the extreme importance of spaces for artists as "artistic incubators," and for mentorship, and professional development. She concluded by noting that funding for the arts should be seen as an investment and not a subsidy.

Julio Torres of Folkfest 2008 addressed the importance of events and organizations such as Saskatoon's Folkfest, and as well as, we should recognize the creative works that have materialized from individuals from various cultural backgrounds. Mr. Torres urged that we must involve our youth, as they are our future.

Colleen Fitzgerald, Director of Educational Media Access and Production at the University of Saskatchewan, presented the importance of arts and culture in education, that it is crucial to remember that the "arts are one of the ways we remember the past and gives insight, respect, and fellowship" and creative entities need to "work cooperatively" to create the things we have to celebrate.

The Minister Christine Tell brought greetings from the Province and spoke of the future work of the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sports. Minister Tell made specific reference to the work unfolding around the development of a Cultural Policy for the Province of Saskatchewan, outlining the next steps.

Todd Brandt

Dr. Terry Rock

Colleen Fitzgerald

The following notes are the result of the facilitated discussions. Participants were lead through a series of questions by facilitators designed to elicit feedback regarding the benefits for and ideal characteristics for a Creative City Strategy for Saskatoon and to identify the specific themes which emerged during the Forum. The following list is a summary of the most common responses.

Benefits of having a Creative City Strategy for Saskatoon

- Enhances the awareness of culture and the creative process
- Increases the quality of life in the city
- Provides a greater "sense of place" with increased civic identity and pride and an enhanced sense of identity
- Confirmation of the importance of culture, arts and heritage
- Collaboration and networking not just artists with other artists or with business but through the larger community
- Creativity attracts and retains youth as well as other creative people
- Establishing a unified voice for the creative sector
- Increased investment in creativity (including direct resources and partnerships)
- Economic development
- Development of links between artists, teachers and schools

Ideal Characteristics of a Creative City Strategy for Saskatoon

- One inclusive voice across all sectors
- Resources that are sufficient and wide spread
- Passionate, diverse and fluid leadership
- Sustainable and achievable with action based measurable goals
- Operates with sound business principles
- Values diversity and inclusiveness
- Includes a feedback mechanism
- Enjoys civic government support

Key Themes

- Inclusiveness and Diversity
- Leadership
- Creative Spaces & Gathering Places
- Resources
- Awareness & Access

"What works" and "what does not work" for each key theme.

Resources

What Works	**What Doesn't Work**
Funding - Saskatchewan Arts Board - Saskatchewan Lotteries - Corporate support Education/Training - cultural tradition/history - U of S - Saskatchewan Writers Guild - Dance Saskatchewan - Playwrights Centre - Saskatchewan Music Infrastructure - The Refinery - Persephone Theatre - The (new) Bassment - Community centers - Green spaces Communication - Saskatoon Wireless - CFCR/ Planet S/ The Sun/ CBC	Funding - No local/city arts council - Limited awareness of resources - Education/Training - None listed Infrastructure - Affordability - Transportation - Ticket costs Communication - Not centralized - Awareness of resources - Efficiency of promotion efforts

Creative Spaces and Places

What Works	What Doesn't Work
- Good parks - Large outdoor spaces - Broadway - Persephone - Buds - Refinery - Kiwanis - Farmer's Market - Meewasin Valley - AKA – artist owned space - Incubators - Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre - High School Gyms - Wanuskewin Heritage Park	- Affordable studio spaces - Affordable living spaces - Need multipurpose places where disciplines can overlap - Segregated due to diversity (culture, background) - Lack of strategic plan to get people to collaborate on what is needed - Planning in isolation - Some public parks - Need midsize places for fewer seats – affordable - Building sitting idle - Development incentives – tight timelines to take action - We don't have old spaces/turning to new cultural spaces - Cater to attraction of artists to locate in Saskatoon

Awareness and Access

What Works	What Doesn't Work
- Festivals and large events - Media support - Grassroots education is slowly expanding - Persephone Theatre	- Lack of understanding of creativity - Lack of performance venues - No connection between grassroots and City administration - Lines of communication - No respect for artist as a legitimate profession

Inclusion & Diversity

What Works	What Doesn't Work
- Identification and increased awareness for race relations - City staffing in place - Folkfest - Skateboard park - SCYAP - Good at supporting independent artists - Venues in place to provide spaces for artists - Free festivals - Embrace cultural diversity - Art Galleries that are free	- Cost of living – not accessible compared to before - Drawing in lower socio-economic groups - Making people feel comfortable to attend functions - Place equal value on art from all cultures - Addressing authentic inclusion - Building inclusion - Attitudes (knowledge groups) - Outcome based process...limits the creative aspect

Leadership

What Works	What Doesn't Work
- Action/Dialogue - Honest assessment - Recognition of value of arts to community - Increased activism by arts community - Passionate involvement - Good examples of quality community leadership - Contribution and collaboration (by BIDS) - Successful partnerships by arts, community and business - Risk taking - Open-minded municipal governance to arts and culture (optimism for future) - Strong economy - Strong individual leadership in arts community	- Lack of necessary funding - No unifying vision - No mechanism of accountability - Reliance on a few leaders to do much - Lack of succession planning (refers to taking organizations to the next level) - No unifying voice/message - Lack of awareness and appreciation - No overall strategy - Not a priority in values - No directory for arts and heritage - Locked in old process - Not fully engaged in creative problem solving or supporting creative cultures within

Key Themes

Leadership

- Engage the community
- Champion the cause/advocacy
- Motivate, education and facilitate, activate

Inclusion/ Diversity

- Getting the right mix of people
- Building on what is working
- Identify barriers to inclusion/diversity

Creative Spaces/Place

- Self-initiative/commitment
- Developmental Resources
- Partnerships – Champions
- Committee started today to infuse, integrate in the round table
- Cooperative to develop existing or new spaces

Resources

- Gap analysis: inventory of resources available and cultural mapping
- Communication: media, central information source, access to info
- Expansion: reliable funding sources, sustainable, programming

Access & Awareness

- One stop shopping: info, events, groups
- Recognition of support and appreciation for their support
- Create convection: provide access for grassroots participants to the upper levels of decision makers (new and existing).

Appendix 1 - Agenda

Toward a Creative City Strategy:

engaging the community

Agenda at-a-Glance

TUESDAY JUNE 24	
8:30 am – 8:35 am	Welcome Address: His Worship Mayor D. Atchison
8:35 am – 9:30 am	Plenary Session: Saskatoon's Creative Vitality: The current state of our Creative City
9:30 am – 10:30 am	Keynote Presentation: Dr. Terry Rock
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Break
11:00 am – 12:00 am	Breakout Sessions
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Keynote Lunch: Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport – The Honorable Christine Tell
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Reporting Session: Collective Themes of Saskatoon's Creative City
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Breakout Sessions
3:00 pm – 3:30 pm	Break
3:30 pm – 4:30 pm	Reporting Session Final Observations by Dr. Terry Rock
4:30 pm	Wine & Cheese Reception *Music By: Carrie Catherine & Sam Mitchell*

Radisson Hotel Saskatoon
405 – 20th Street East
(306) 665-3322

Appendix 2 – Creative City Strategy List of Participants

Honourable Christine Tell		Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport, Government of Saskatchewan
His Worship Mayor Donald Atchison		City of Saskatoon
Dr. Terry Rock		Calgary Arts Development Authority Ltd., President and CEO
Name	**Sector**	**Representing**
Derek Bachman	Music	Greenduplex Productions/SaskMusic, Musician
Nancy Bellegarde	Community Development	City of Saskatoon, Planning & Development
Sheldon Born	Performing Arts	Persephone Theatre, General Manager
Todd Brandt	Heritage	Tourism Saskatoon, President and CEO
Charlie Clark		City of Saskatoon, Councillor
Terice Coleman	Cultural	Saskatoon FolkFest, Program Assistant
Karen Conway	Performing Arts	TCU Place, Director of Operations
Bruce Cory	Business	Broadway BID, Executive Director
Bob Crowe	Visual Arts	Angel Entertainment Corp.
William Delainey	Heritage	Historian
Doug Drader	Facilitator	Fast Consulting
Bev Drew	Music	Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra, Board President
Bev Dubois		City of Saskatoon, Councillor
Henry Dutka	Facilitator	City of Saskatoon, Community Development, Consultant
Randy Fernets	Heritage	Tourism Saskatoon, Director of Corporate Development and Visitor Services
Colleen Fitzgerald	Education & Academics	University of Saskatchewan, Director Of Education, Media Production and Access
Dennis Garreck		SaskCulture, Community Outreach Development Manager
Carol Greyeyes	Visual Arts	Saskatchewan Arts Board, Indigenous Arts Advisor
Catherine Gryba		City of Saskatoon, Leisure Services Branch Manager
Cheri Hamilton	Facilitator	Tourism Saskatoon, Event Planning Assistant
Shannon Hanson		City of Saskatoon, Social Development Manager
Donna Heimbecker	Performing Arts	SK Native Theatre Co., General Manager
Jim Hodges	Music	Crosstown Entertainment
Carrie Horachek	Music	Musician
Kevin Kitchen	Community Development	City of Saskatoon, Community Initiatives Manager
Peter Kooy	Performing Arts	Off Broadway Dinner Theatre,
Susan Lamb	Environment	Meewasin Valley Authority, CEO
Jackie Latendresse	Performing Arts	Freeflow Dance Company, Artistic Director
Betty Anne Latrace-Henderson	Business	Airlines Hotels and Resorts, President

Patricia Leguen	Visual Arts	Artist
Phyllis Lodoen	Business	IDEAS Inc., General Manager
Pat Lorje		City of Saskatoon, Councillor
Silvia Martini	Business	Tourism Saskatoon, VP Marketing
Cam McConnell	Music	President, AFM local 553
Jesse McGibney	Visual Arts	Artist
Judy Montgomery	Environment	Saskatchewan Environmental Society
Jeremy Morgan		Saskatchewan Arts Board Executive Director,
Amanda Murray	Performing Arts	def SOL Productions, Artistic Director
Victoria Neufeld	Heritage	Saskatoon Heritage Society, President
Devin O'Neal	Education & Academics	SCN, Board of Directors
Rick Olmstead	Development	Prairie Eco Village
Janet Olsen	Heritage	Western Development Museum , Marketing Coordinator
Ed Pas	Visual Arts	Mendel Art Gallery, Communications Coordinator
Tiffany Paulsen		City of Saskatoon, Councillor
Randy Pshebylo	Business	Riversdale BID, Executive Director
Kevin Quinlan	Visual Arts	Artist
Erika Quiring	Environment	CanNorth Environmental Services, Consulting Biologist
Terri Rau	Cultural	Saskatoon FolkFest, Executive Director
Jill Reid	Performing Arts	Dance Sask, Executive Director
Patricia Roe	Education & Academics	Sherbrooke Centre, Leader for Development and Communications
Peggy Sarjeant	Heritage	Saskatoon Heritage Society, Member
Becky Sasakamoose Kuffner	Cultural	City of Saskatoon Cultural Diversity and Race Relations Coordinator
Terry Scadden	Business	The Downtown Partnership, Executive Director
Lorna Scott	Visual Arts	Artist
Barb Selsky	Cultural	Wanuskewin, Director of Marketing
Jeff Smith	Authors/Creative Writing	Saskatoon Writers' Coop, Vice President
Jeanna South	Development	City of Saskatoon, Urban Design Manager
Lisa Thibodeau	Facilitator	City of Saskatoon, Community Development, Consultant
Kathryn Thompson	Facilitator	Fast Consulting
Tracey Thompson	Facilitator	Tourism Saskatoon, Administrative Assistant
Julio Torres	Cultural	Univerisity of Saskatachewan, Linguistics Dept.
Andrew Turnbull	Business	Hotel Bessborough/Tourism Saskatoon Board of Directors, Chair
Toni Villiers	Facilitator	Action Associates
James Weseen	Authors/Creative Writing	Saskatoon Writers' Coop, President
Frances Westlund	Heritage	City of Saskatoon, Arts & Grants Consultant
Kirby Wirchenko	Performing Arts	Broadway Theatre, Executive Director
Carol Wylie	Visual Arts	Artist