



Cultural Policy

**For The Corporation of the
City of Sault Ste. Marie**

**Sault Ste. Marie
Cultural Vitality Committee
October 2021**

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Cultural Policy For The Corporation of the City Of Sault Ste. Marie

Preamble

In the summer of 1986, as part of the major Waterfront Study commissioned by Council, a Committee comprised of staff representatives of the Community Services Department, the Planning Board and members of the public involved in cultural matters was formed to investigate and recommend what facility(s) might be appropriate to make provision for within the overall master plan. This action was consistent with a number of previous conceptual schemes for development or redevelopment of the downtown area (ranging back to the Faludi Study of 1961) which had proposed the inclusion of various community-use facilities. Later that year, at the suggestion of the (then) Ministry of Citizenship and Culture and with their financial participation - the scope of study was expanded to provide a more comprehensive cultural strategy and the Klein/McInnes group was engaged to do the work. Following tabling of the study in March 1988, Council established a study committee to review aspects of the document and make recommendations for its implementation. The Committee met regularly during 1989 and submitted their report to Council August 1989.

One of their proposals was that a Cultural Advisory Board be formed: "To advise, assist and make recommendations to Council on Cultural matters with specific reference to cultural grant applications and the development of a Municipal Cultural Policy." A Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie was first adopted by City Council in 1991.

The recommendations, which resulted from a cultural forum held September 19, 1995, were incorporated within the revised Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie, April 30, 1996. Recommendations arising from a review of policy implementation conducted in a municipal forum on February 12, 2002 have been incorporated within this second revision, Spring, 2002. Recommendations arising from a cultural forum held in the fall of 2007 were incorporated in a third revision dated January 25, 2010. The fourth revision came out of recommendations provided at a cultural forum held on March 30, 2011. This fifth revision has incorporated the recommendations provided at the June 25, 2015 Cultural Forum.

The following recommendations have been met since the passing of the Cultural Policy. The recommendation that City Council create the City of Sault Ste. Marie Cultural Endowment Trust Fund was approved by City Council in the 2008 budget. City Council provided \$10,000 as seed funds to establish the Cultural Endowment Trust Fund. The proposed *City of Sault Ste. Marie Cultural Endowment Trust Fund* is a fund to collect and distribute monies for purchase and necessary installation, or the commissioning of 'works of art' or other cultural activities for the enhancement of such capital projects as is outlined in the Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie. The Cultural Advisory Board was assigned the responsibility of maintaining and administering the trust fund.

In 2017, the City of Sault Ste. Marie released 'A Common Cause and New Direction for Sault Ste. Marie'. The 20-year plan focuses on four pillars: Economic Growth and Diversity, Social Equity, Cultural Vitality, Environmental Sustainability and provided a series of recommendations including the development of a Cultural Plan. This plan was to foster investment and economic development in Arts, Culture & Heritage with the goals to strengthen partnerships to promote cultural vitality in the community and to strengthen connectivity amongst those in the creative sector, promoting future sector sustainability and growth. Arts, Culture and Heritage influence economic prosperity and tourism diversity leading to a thriving and healthy community.

As part of the resulting Future SSM Project, The SSM Community Culture Plan 2019-2024 (CCP) was developed, completed and approved by City Council in September of 2019 and implementation of the 6 Goals and 36 Actions, created as a result, was commenced thereafter. The City's Cultural Advisory Board (CAB) was consolidated with the Arts & Culture Action Team (ACAT) from the Future SSM Project forming the new Cultural Vitality Committee (CVC), which is assigned the responsibility of maintaining and administering the new Arts & Culture Assistance Program (ACAP) funding structure developed as a result of formerly mentioned Goals/Actions of the CCP. In 2020, the ACAP funding was increased from \$53,900 to \$104,500.

1. General Considerations

1.1 Statement of Purpose

The City recognizes the diversity of cultural groups in the community, the uniqueness of their mandates and the various expressions of such as contributing to residents' increased sense of belonging, quality of life and overall health and well-being.

The City promotes a culture of inclusion, recognizing the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples, the benefits of promoting innovation through multicultural, accessible and intergenerational engagement and participation in all aspects of civic life.

The Corporation aims to enhance the role of heritage buildings and community facilities as hubs for cultural program delivery and opportunity for engaging diverse demographics through an inclusive, fair and balanced approach to cultural service delivery. The City acknowledges the importance of the cultural industry's contribution to socioeconomic resilience through generating employment, creating a distinctive community identity, nurturing community and individual social wellness and an attractive place to live. This policy provides a framework to guide the planning, provision, and supports of arts, culture and heritage in Sault Ste. Marie.

1.2 Definition of Culture

Culture in Sault Ste. Marie is the individual and collective creativity and artistic expression in all its forms, as referenced in this municipal cultural policy, influenced and inspired by its diverse peoples, its industrial and social history, Indigenous heritage and natural beauty. Culture reflects the elements and traits of peoples of historical and contemporary societies, and the places, events, products and creations that contribute to such values, customs, and traditions.

Culture is a complex word; however, two interrelated definitions stand out:

- i) The social production and transmission of identities, means, knowledge, beliefs, values, aspiration, memories, purposes, attitudes and understanding;
- ii) The 'way of life' of a particular set of humans: customs, faiths and conventions; codes and manners, dress, cuisine, language, arts, science, technology, religion and rituals; norms and regulations of behaviors; traditions and institutions.

For the purposes of this document, 'Culture' refers to what is typically considered as, but **not** limited to the following:

- **Visual Arts:** painting, drawing, printmaking, applied arts, craft, sculpture, mixed media, fine arts, material arts, installation, etc.;
- **Performing Arts:** theatre, music, dance, opera, mime, spoken word, magic illusion, puppetry, etc.;
- **Media Arts:** photography, film, video, audio, digital, electronic games & virtual reality, sound, cyber arts, etc.;
- **Literary Arts:** writers - fiction and non-fiction, storytelling, poetry, prose, playwriting, etc.;
- **Multi and Inter-Arts:** supports a range of artistic activity that falls outside of existing artistic disciplines, including community-engaged arts, inter-arts explorations, unique collaborations across art forms and multi and inter-arts festivals, events and series, etc.;
- **Heritage Arts:** inherited traditions, objects, culture, left to us by our ancestors and seen in archaeology, natural environment, architecture, decorative arts, collections, artefacts, archives, and oral histories. Cultural heritage includes tangible, moveable, immovable, and intangible heritage, etc.;
- **Public Arts:** Public Art is defined as art in any medium that is situated in a public space. Public Art plays a role in beautifying the community, engaging residents and creating a sense of place, creating links to economic growth and strengthening tourism (Public Art Policy link).

2. Statement of Policy

2.1 Policy Objectives

The objectives of the *Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie* are:

- 2.1.1 To encourage, promote, support, maintain, and further develop cultural expression in Sault Ste. Marie, at all levels and for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- 2.1.2 To encourage the appreciation and enjoyment of arts, culture and heritage.

- 2.1.3 To facilitate participation in and activation of arts, culture and heritage.
- 2.1.4 To advocate for the importance of the cultural industry in the development of civic pride, a municipal sense of identity, to foster an inclusive sense of belonging within the community and its economic and social impact on the whole community.
- 2.1.5 To provide arms-length funding of arts, culture and heritage activities.
- 2.1.6 To encourage the preservation of historic buildings and their rehabilitation for cultural uses.
- 2.1.7 To provide opportunities for artists and the public to express their individual and collective ideas through Public Art as a means to build community pride and strengthen community identity.

3. Policy Implementation

3.1 To Encourage and Promote the Development of Cultural Expression in Sault Ste. Marie At All Levels

- 3.1.1 Maintain a Cultural Vitality Committee (CVC) for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie as a Board of Council, whose primary purpose is to advise on all matters concerning the cultural life of the community and the implementation of the *Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie.*
- 3.1.2 Maintain a position in the Recreation and Culture Division, Community Services Department to work with the CVC and the cultural community.
- 3.1.3 Provide Municipal support of cultural activities to an extent consistent with Municipal support in other areas such as recreational activities/resources. Examples include *The Arts & Culture Assistance Program (ACAP)* and *The Provincial/National/International Cultural Competition Policy.*
- 3.1.4 To encourage access to arts, culture and heritage in public spaces and to develop an accessible inventory of that public art. By showcasing works in public areas of the Civic Centre and other civic buildings as appropriate, and to provide advice to City Council with respect to the appropriateness of form and placement of proposed local works of art on City property or within municipal buildings and provide information about the public art inventory to the community.

- 3.1.5 Provide administrative support to the CVC.
- 3.1.6 Encourage the integration of arts, culture and heritage into community events.
- 3.1.7 Identify safe places where historical works and collections can be preserved, classified, and digitized for the interpretation and presentation of collective memories, stories and distinct identity.
- 3.1.8 To advocate and ensure that Culture is included in municipal strategies and plans: i.e. economic, social, and downtown development strategies.

3.2 To Encourage the Appreciation and Enjoyment of Culture

- 3.2.1 Recognize, promote and advocate for the unique status of all community cultural groups and their mandates to expand cultural interests generally and speak for their members in particular.
- 3.2.2 Provide information, guidance and advice to support groups in the arts, culture and heritage sectors.
- 3.2.3 Create a forum at least every four years that will encourage and support the exchange of information related to the activities of local individuals/groups covered by the policy, to provide feedback on the status of implementation and effectiveness of the Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie (see item 1.4) and the Community Culture Plan for Sault Ste. Marie.
- 3.2.4. Ensure that whenever possible, municipal gifts to dignitaries are locally produced cultural items through a call for submissions from artists and juried process as outlined in the attached appendix OR embed the existing procedure as a sub-point to this item.
- 3.2.5 Encourage the development of formal and informal presentations of artists and their work, through financial support, recognition, public calls for exhibition, submission and commission, etc.

3.3 To Provide Appropriate Conditions in Which Arts, Culture & Heritage Can Thrive and Prosper

- 3.3.1 The Cultural Policy ensures for the dedication of 1% of the total construction and/or renovation costs of public facilities, including where appropriate, major municipal infrastructure projects towards the commissioning and installation of art or other cultural activities where, as an integral part of the building or site, it is appropriate. Otherwise, allocated funds shall either be directed towards similar use in alternative facilities based on recommendation of city staff and the CVC, go to *the Community Development Fund - Arts & Culture (CDFAC)*, or to the *City of Sault Ste. Marie Cultural Endowment Trust Fund (See Section 5)*.
- 3.3.2 Assist in the preparation of a comprehensive database of arts, culture and heritage resources within the community (e.g. physical plant, human and financial resources) for inclusion in the City's Arts & Culture Website to include, where appropriate, cross-referencing to e-mail and website addresses. [Arts & Culture Website link](#)
- 3.3.3 Require that the circulation of development proposals where rezoning or development requests may impact arts, culture and heritage facilities be circulated to the CVC and/or the Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) where appropriate and that the CVC and/or MHC be given an opportunity to comment on all such applications to City Council.
- 3.3.4 Work with internal and external agencies (EDC, TSSM, DTA, SSMCOC, etc.) and other relevant organizations, to promote Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District as a good place to live and visit, through the support and development of our arts, culture and heritage activities and attractions.
- 3.3.5 To develop and maintain a Community Culture Plan that encourages and facilitates integrating arts, culture and heritage as defined in this Policy, into other departments' planning and development strategies such as the Cultural Tourism Strategy.

3.4 To Acknowledge the Importance of the Arts, Culture & Heritage Sector in the Development of Civic Pride and a Municipal Sense of Identity as well as its Social and Economic Impacts on The City

- 3.4.1 Present annual award(s) under the CVC *Community Recognition Award Program*, to individuals, groups or organizations who contribute significantly to the arts, culture and heritage of the community.
- 3.4.2 Recognize the social and economic impact of culture on the City of Sault Ste. Marie and Algoma District and encourage local businesses, corporations and organizations to support arts, culture and heritage in any way possible (e.g. gifts in kind, support for advertising as well as financial support and contributions).

3.5 To Provide Arms-Length Funding Of Culture

- 3.5.1 Maintain and expand existing annual budgets to facilities and organizations in the arts, culture and heritage sector and determine, from time to time, additional activities which, by virtue of their long-term support through the *Arts & Culture Assistance Program (ACAP)*, should receive support via annual budgets in order to allow the CVC to consider new programs and services for recommendation to, and consideration by City Council.
- 3.5.2 The CVC to screen all applications for grants for cultural endeavors, under the *Arts & Culture Assistance Program (ACAP)* and *The Provincial/National/International Cultural Competition Policy* and to recommend to City Council the awarding of such grants within the annual budget allocation.
- 3.5.3 Maintain and expand the *Arts & Culture Assistance Program (ACAP)* funding.
- 3.5.4 Develop and promote uniform criteria to ensure that new and existing arts, culture and heritage groups or individuals have equal opportunity to apply for financial assistance.
- 3.5.5 Through the *City of Sault Ste. Marie Cultural Endowment Trust Fund (CETF)* and the *Community Development Fund - Arts & Culture (CDFAC)*, safeguard and direct to purposes consistent with the *Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie*, such funds as may be derived from implementation of criteria established in item 3.3.1 and from other sources which may, from time-to-time, become available (e.g. gifts, bequests, special grants). [CETF and CDFAC link](#)
- 3.5.6 Maintain information about and means for applying for funds described in 3.3.2 on the Arts & Culture website of the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

3.6 To Encourage the Development of Historic Buildings as Alternate Cultural Facilities

- 3.6.1 Request Sault Ste. Marie Municipal Heritage Committee (MHC) to review alternative uses for buildings worthy of designation or already designated but which may come available in the future.
- 3.6.2 Encourage and entertain proposals from the community for use of historical buildings or other appropriate sites.

3.6.3 When appropriate, lease municipal historic buildings to interested entrepreneurs and arts, culture and heritage organizations with the stipulation that they be maintained to a specified standard.

3.6.4 Encourage the conservation and preservation of historic sites and buildings.

4. Cultural Vitality Committee

4.1 Purpose

The CVC is a committee of City Council that works within the Cultural Policy for the City of Sault Ste. Marie to ensure equitable access to all individuals, groups and organizations to enjoy opportunities for the preservation, development and appreciation of cultural expression with the committed support of the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

The Committee's role is to support the implementation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie Cultural Policy and the Community Culture Plan and provide advice to City Council on issues, policies and strategies related to arts, culture and heritage enterprises and activities in the city. The CVC oversees cultural support programs, participates in city planning and development processes as defined in Section 3.3.3, undertakes special initiatives approved by Council and perform the duties as described in the CVC Terms of Reference.

4.2 Membership

The members of the Cultural Vitality Committee (CVC) are appointed every two (2) years and they include:

- Mayor - Ex-officio
- One (1) City Councilor
- One (1) member of Mayors Youth Advisory Council
- Minimum of six (6) members of the community based on their knowledge, interest and involvement in culture as defined in the Cultural Policy of the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

4.3 Officers

Each year the CVC will elect from its members a Chair and Vice-Chair.

4.4 Cultural Policy

Implement and review the Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie within the first year of each new Council. A public forum shall be held with an open invitation to all arts, culture and heritage organizations and interested individuals to provide input into an updated cultural policy. The CVC will review all input and revise the policy by majority consensus. The revised policy will be sent to City Council for their approval.

4.5 Community Culture Plan

Advocate for the development, implementation and review of the Community Culture Plan led by the Recreation and Culture Department in collaboration with other City Departments (where appropriate), individuals, organizations and government agencies and the community ensuring an equitable, inclusive and consultative approach to the process is undertaken. The Community Culture Plan will be reviewed in similar fashion to Section 4.4 (Cultural Policy) every five years.

4.6 Excellence

- 4.6.1 Advise on matters concerning arts, culture and heritage in the City, including development and delivery of detailed multi-year plans.
- 4.6.2 Encourage, recognize and reward initiative and excellence at all levels of local arts, culture and heritage activities.
- 4.6.3 Work with community stakeholders to identify barriers to participation, implementing solutions to provide accessible, safe sites and facilities appropriate to the creation, production and presentation of arts, culture and heritage.
- 4.6.4 Encourage the promotion of arts, culture and heritage services and programs in the community.

4.7 Grant, Fund and Award Applications

- 4.7.1 Review and update appropriate application process for all arts and culture grant and award applications.
- 4.7.2 Promote uniform and equitable criteria to ensure that all new and existing arts and culture groups and individuals have equal opportunity to apply for financial assistance.

4.7.3 Screen and coordinate all arts and culture grant and award applications with the support of staff from the Recreation and Culture Division, Community Services Department.

4.7.4 Make recommendations to City Council regarding arts and culture grant and award processes it has overseen.

4.8 Community Consultation

4.8.1 Establish a forum at least every four (4) years to provide feedback on the status of implementation and effectiveness of the *Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie*.

4.8.2 Periodically create a forum, which will encourage and support the exchange of information related to the activities of local individuals/groups covered by the policy. e.g., a 'State of the Arts' to engage City councilors, municipal staff, the arts, culture and heritage sector and the broader community of Sault Ste. Marie.

4.9 Community Links

4.9.1 Work in cooperation and in consultation with the City and arts, culture and heritage organizations, individuals and stakeholders.

4.9.2 Develop links with a broad base and inclusive spectrum of sectors, including business, education, social services, etc.

5. City Of Sault Ste. Marie Cultural Endowment Trust & Community Development Fund - Arts & Culture

5.1 Purpose

The City of Sault Ste. Marie Cultural Endowment Trust Fund (CETF) and the Community Development Fund - Arts & Culture (CDFAC) are to be used towards the commissioning and installation of works of art or other cultural activities for the enhancement of such capital projects as outlined in Section 3.3.1 of the Cultural Policy of the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

5.2 Decisions

All decisions with regard to the CETF and CDFAC Funds will be made by the current members of the CVC.

5.3 Developers

City Planning and Recreation & Culture Department staff in consultation with the CVC will ensure that developers are made aware of the Cultural Policy and CETF and CDFAC funds as part of the development application process.

5.4 Municipal Staff

Recreation & Culture Department staff will ensure that appropriate municipal staff are aware of the requirements of the Cultural Policy for the Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie.

5.5 Awareness

5.5.1. The City of Sault Ste. Marie shall encourage non-municipal new builds, within city limits, to support arts, culture and heritage by making and promoting donations to the CETF and CDFAC Funds. Such promotion may include notice through the Building Permits office of the City of the advantages of the Funds and the opportunity to contribute as part of the development's commitment to civic beautification, pride and recognition of arts, culture and heritage of the city.

5.5.2 Encourage donations to the CETF and CDFAC Funds from other potential sources, (e.g. bequests) by including the Funds as a separate listing on the City's Arts and Culture website and elsewhere where appropriate.

5.6 Reporting

An annual report on the CETF and CDFAC Funds will be provided to the CVC by Recreation & Culture Department staff.