

# Governance and Leadership of the Region's Art System

Prepared as a Discussion Paper for a Planning Workshop,  
September 19, 2002

This Workshop will look at a vision for the arts system and how the system should be organized and led if this vision is to be achieved.

## A Vision for the Arts in the Capital Region

### THE PLACE OF THE ARTS

VISION: The arts in our region will be a part of, not apart from the community - tied into what else is happening both locally and elsewhere, through well-developed communication, cooperation, and coordination.

VISION: The arts in our region will continue to be a force for community development, contributing to our community identify, bringing us together, enriching our lives, and making our region a desirable place to be.

VISION: The arts in our region will reflect the region's demographic and cultural diversity, as well as all artistic disciplines, forms, and levels of ability.

VISION: The arts in our region will continue to make a significant contribution, both directly and indirectly, to the economic sustainability of our communities and region.

### THE HEALTH OF THE ARTS

VISION: The arts in our region will be vibrant, innovative, and creative.

VISION: The arts in our region will derive from a wide range of sources the necessary funding, staffing, and facilities to sustain them.

VISION: The artists of our region will be acknowledged as a valuable community resource for their social and economic contributions.

VISION: The arts will be recognized, supported, and promoted as an attractive career choice.

### THE EXPERIENCE OF THE ARTS

VISION: The arts in our region will be accessible to all in terms of availability, affordability, and acceptance.

VISION: The arts in our region will acknowledge the continuum from the beginner or hobbyist to the established professional, providing appropriate support and nurturing at all levels.

The **current governance system for the arts in the region** includes the following organizations and agencies:

- CRD - in 2001, many of the responsibilities for the arts were consolidated under the jurisdiction of the CRD. These included ownership of the Royal Theatre and MacPherson Playhouse, distribution of operating and special project grants, and management of the Arts Manager's Office. The CRD has established an Arts Committee to set policy and make recommendations to the Board, an Arts Advisory Council to adjudicate grants, and a Facilities Sub-Committee (of the Finance Committee) to oversee the operation of the two theatres, which are in turn managed by the Royal-MacPherson Theatres Society. Some aspects of this transfer process are still

underway. Apart from the four core municipalities, only Highlands and Mechosin are financial contributors to this regional arts function. Other roles foreseen for the CRD included communication and coordination, facility funding, arts tourism and public art.

- Municipalities, Recreation Commissions, Library Boards - municipalities are involved with the arts in various ways. In particular, through their recreation departments they deliver community arts programming, and through their planning departments they are involved with public art and other aspects of art as part of urban design; Saanich for instance now has a comprehensive arts policy, and other municipalities provide community grants for festivals and community events including the arts. In the Western Communities and Peninsula, recreation function is delivered sub-regionally through a recreation commission. Libraries also promote the literary arts.
- School Districts - the four districts deliver arts programs to students in both curricular and extra-curricular settings, and have a range of arts facilities, such as theatres, within their inventories.
- Camosun College and University of Victoria - both post-secondary institutions offer art programs for students and for the community. They also have facilities that are primarily designed to serve the educational process, but which also get used for community and in some cases commercial arts productions. Some of these programs are partnerships with outside groups: for instance, the Conservatory is the delivery arm of the Camosun Music program.
- Single Purpose Non-profit societies - many arts organizations are structured as non-profit societies with focused mandates. Examples would be the Art Gallery of Gt Victoria, the Belfry, Symphony, as well as many smaller organizations. These are all established under the Society Act; their members tend to be individuals.
- Umbrella groups - such as the Community Arts Councils and ProArt, these groups carry out a range of tasks for their members who are both individuals (CACs only - not ProArt) and arts organizations.
- Commercial ventures - art galleries, book shops, dance schools, theatre and dance promoters....all are commercial ventures, although the distinction between them and non-profit ventures may sometimes be marginal.

Many other agencies and organizations are involved with the arts, although for many it is only in passing; Tourism Victoria would be one example.

The RASP must lay out a governance structure for the arts in the region. Is this present and newly adopted system adequate to move the arts forward toward the vision laid out on the previous page? Some key questions include:

- Given that the arts are a function that is shared between regional and municipal governments in this region, what should be the role of the CRD? What should it be responsible for? What is required for the CRD to encourage the development and implementation of a broad vision of the arts? What structures are needed within the CRD – at the political and administrative level. What resources does it need? What needs to change?
- Should jurisdictions in the region be encouraged to become part of the regional arts mandate? If so, how? What are some concrete steps/programs that could be undertaken?
- Should the role of the Arts Advisory Council be strengthened? If so, what should that role be and how does the existing structure need to be changed?
- What should be the roles and responsibilities of the Community Arts Councils and ProArt? Are they doing this now? If not, what resources do they need to carry out these roles?
- How can the role of the arts in economic development best be moved forward? What organizations will be the catalysts for making it happen?

# Regional Arts Strategic Plan

## Results at Governance Planning Workshop

### Sept. 19, 2002

This workshop focused on governance and leadership. It had two agenda items:

- A presentation of the ideas presented in the Discussion Paper that had been distributed by email to all workshop participants.
- Whole group discussion of the ideas presented.

### **Presentation**

The overheads from Bob Yates' presentation as well as the discussion paper are in separate .pdf documents and can be downloaded from the CRD website.

### **Whole Group Reporting**

The key points from the groups' discussion are as follows:

*As much as possible, this summary incorporates the actual words of the participants as recorded on the flip charts. It is provided as a record what people said, without editing for any errors. It is your words, not ours.*

### **Some Overall Comments**

- Add to the vision: individual artists, writers, etc. who work in the arts community; benefactors and patrons who support and encourage the arts, including corporate and business sponsors; the word 'global' as applied to the continuum of arts in and from our community.
- Do not put the CAC's and ProArt on the same line as they are not considered to play the same role in the arts mix.
- Suggested new chapter heading for report - What we have learned from other planning studies. 'Art serves a public function, not a function apart from the public.'
- 'Arts organizations are not just a pressure group.'
- 'Looking forward to the day when it is embarrassing not to be a member of an arts organization, as subscriber or patron of the arts.'
- 'Hope this is not the end of the planning process; the spirit of generosity and sharing is here.'

## ***The Role for the CRD in the Arts***

**Question from Discussion Paper** - *Given that the arts are a function that is shared between regional and municipal governments in this region, what should be the role of the CRD? What should it be responsible for? What is required for the CRD to encourage the development and implementation of a broad vision of the arts? What structures are needed within the CRD – at the political and administrative level. What resources does it need? What needs to change?*

### **Clarify and Communicate the Role of the CRD**

- The CRD must not waste the opportunity which the Arts Plan provides; it gives a chance to totally change and redirect regional initiatives and recreate the Arts Committee, Commission, and the Development Office; 'a new system will be advantageous to all.'
- 'The Arts Plan is creating a vision for the arts and a process for implementing it. At the same time, the region and its municipalities are developing and have aspirations for stronger arts. We need to work together to build that vision and to access resources for the arts.'
- The CRD is at the top of governance pyramid; the key is to clarify and determine an appropriate view of policy, structure, funding, and other administrative functions for the arts community in keeping with this position; i.e. what position should the CRD adopt viz. a viz. each of these components for the arts.
- Provide a vision, leadership and support to organizations which have a regional impact. This will require new style of proactive leadership - making 'the tough decisions' - This style needs to be adopted by the CRD, as it for too long has been reactive concerning the needs of the arts. However, an important caveat is that the CRD cannot be responsible for everything that is happening regionally within the arts community.
- The appropriate approach for the CRD is to provide strong leadership for the arts but to allow for 'organic' development as well, i.e. not to be too directive.
- CRD needs to clearly define and make known its own position on leadership role, policy, structure, funding, and other region-wide initiatives.
- CRD must continue consultation with all members of the arts community after the Arts Plan is completed; ongoing consultation with all players but tailored to the specific needs of individual arts groups as required.
- Keep a clear sense that the CRD is different from the municipalities and acknowledge that municipalities are rapidly moving to serve their own community based arts interests, although there are still considerable differences among municipalities in their level of support for the arts. This is particularly the case in the Western Communities where municipal support for the arts is not available - 'artists must not be punished by their decisions to live in certain municipalities'. The situation engenders a regional coordination role for the CRD.
- There is a strong need for the region to provide support for some region-wide facilities/organizations which are unable to deal effectively with 13 municipalities
- Perhaps there needs to be a 'community' identity of a different order developed on a regional level; when some participants say 'community' they mean at the regional level,

while other participants do not see 'community' at such a broad level. How do we define 'community' and 'regional' in terms of the arts and in terms of the arts' spatial impacts?

### **The CRD to Provide Shareable Services**

- The CRD needs to create an entity which will be endowed with adequate staff and office resources and an empowered staff mandate to identify the needs of the arts community and continue the consultation begun with the Arts Plan. The intent is to improve the delivery of public resources to the arts community through an identifiable CRD organizational structure. A number of roles for this new entity were suggested:
  - set up an entity where benefactors and patrons of the arts can contribute,
  - inform municipal politicians how it is to their benefit to support the arts; explain those 'kudos' opportunities,
  - liaise with the sports community for joint marketing ventures at sports events such as in Seattle,
  - encourage a local interface by traveling around the region for important meetings or have local offices located throughout the region,
  - provide consultation to municipalities who do not know where to start arts development,
  - advocate for new groups such as the Work Point project, to help them get a start.
- Support for Public Art: provide public art coordination throughout the region with a designated staff person, assistance with the art selection and jury process, and advice on municipally developed art in public place policies.

### **A CRD Governance Board**

- The composition of the CRD Board to oversee the arts would be one which is flexible and inclusive in terms of those who are not usually on core advisory boards; i.e. those organizations and individuals who only represent region-wide interests. Ideally, would include individual artists but these are difficult to represent.
- 'Elected officials change and are vote oriented, not long term or planning oriented.'

### ***Including Municipal Authorities***

**Question from Discussion Paper** - *Should jurisdictions in the region be encouraged to become part of the regional arts mandate? If so, how? What are some concrete steps/programs that could be undertaken?*

- It is important to keep in mind that the development of a new or expanded presence in the arts will not happen overnight and we must consider that we represent a region of a particular size with a particular level of resources to devote to the arts; i.e. Victoria is not a New York, or even a Vancouver.
- The Arts Plan needs to look at the regional view despite differences between municipalities in their support for the arts and continue to provide those resources that have a regional or multiple impact; 'region-wide impact will eventually lead to region-wide support.'
- The Arts Plan needs to recognize 'regional realities' and encourage communities to create them. It must also acknowledge the reality of the downtown, and the place, and potential place, of the arts in it..
- 'Leave the municipalities out if they don't support the arts.'

- Elected officials need to be lobbied to show how support of the arts can deliver votes; although politicians reflect all of the electorate, the arts lobby has not been completely effective in encouraging politicians to support the arts - 'politicians have the ability to make things happen' and we need ambassadors for the arts speaking to councils.
- It is difficult to achieve continuity to build knowledge of the arts as elected officials serve for three year terms.
- Do the residents of the 7 municipalities who do not fund the CRD arts initiatives know this is the case? We need to inform and clarify to the public just which municipalities supports what in the arts.
- Improve public awareness of the arts in municipalities; organize regional events that involve municipalities. For example, use Robin Hopper's ideas for using regional parks, bringing the downtown to the outside; increase public awareness through education.
- Uncertain whether we can approach municipalities without first knowing what the arts community needs or wants.
- Perhaps a facility-driven approach is best to encourage municipal participation - 'need to wrap a structure around all the quality stuff we have' in the arts.

### ***CRD Arts Advisory Council***

**Question from Discussion Paper** - *Should the role of the Arts Advisory Council be strengthened? If so, what should that role be and how does the existing structure need to be changed?*

- Create an independent, appointed body which does not report to the Arts Committee but directly to the CRD Board, with a mandate to allocate arts budgets; 'spend a global budget without the protocol of the rubber stamp of the Arts Committee or the Board.' How would this affect funding participation by municipalities?
- There are opportunities for an Arts Advisory Council to;
  - play a larger role in regional arts policy development,
  - review, monitor, and present progress on the implementation of the Arts Plan,
  - advocacy role for emergent projects and groups (such as the Work Point project),
  - provide a sounding board where new projects can be presented and discussed (such as The Bay building),
  - provide continuity of expertise,
  - improve the status of the arts within the CRD's governance structure,
  - create working sub-committees,
  - act as a conduit for contact with the media,
  - increase the profile of the arts generally.
- BC Arts Council and the Canada Council are useful models in terms of the way they select members - 'practitioners' - for their expertise, although it is recognized this is more difficult to do in a smaller setting such as the CRD.
- The Land Conservancy (TLC) is a useful model for facility fund raising in the arts.
- Is the Arts Advisory Council's current role to allocate the arts funding or is it their role to find as much money as possible for the arts? - to allocate money from the CRD Board, with considerable time devoted to assessment of grant applications - if they are to do more, a larger Council is needed.

## **CAC's & ProArt**

**Question from Discussion Paper** - *What should be the roles and responsibilities of the Community Arts Councils and ProArt? Are they doing this now? If not, what resources do they need to carry out these roles?*

- CAC's usually have very limited resources and limited membership. They mainly represent visual artists; difficult to see an expanded role with no increase in funding for space and staff.
- Critical to improve the relationship between CACs and municipalities and to create a relationship with the CRD.
- Perhaps ProArt could assist CACs?
- The CAC of Greater Victoria has been very successful in obtaining downtown gallery space which is heavily used by emerging visual artists and well attended; a part-time staff position was critical to this success. Needs to encourage some community fund-raising events.
- CACs have a difficult time serving individual artists, and some artists may prefer to deal with an organization such as the CRD which has a broader vision of the arts than do some municipalities.
- Challenge for ProArt is to fund services, research, and activities without taking away operating monies from member organizations. Roles include making linkages with policy and granting bodies, consensus building, acting as a sounding board for policy development, time saving allowing a collaborative response when speaking on behalf of members.
- ProArt is not an elitist organization but one which acts to serve its members.

## **Economic Development**

**Question from Discussion Paper** - *How can the role of the arts in economic development best be moved forward? What organizations will be the catalysts for making it happen?*

- The major linkage of the arts to economic development is that the arts enrich society as a whole, which in turn results in attracting people who create economic development. Companies always look at the culture in the community when they relocate - 'who moved to Victoria because of its cultural richness and what did they bring with them.' The idea of the 'arts magnet.'
- 'Four facility cornerstones of a culture rich community - a symphony, a theater, an opera, and an art gallery. In Victoria, only one brick has been laid - the Belfry.'
- Integrate the arts into public economic development policy.
- Integrate the arts into municipal plans.
- Improved data are required to support the economic contributions of the arts. Use statistics in the Arts Plan to show audience participation.
- The arts have to be collectively more visible.

- Build alliances with others such as the sports community.
- Need investment in the arts to gain an economic benefit; need to have arts facilities.
- Role of UVIC in attracting students considered an economic benefit.
- Need to work with Tourism Victoria to promote the arts.