

# THE CASTLEGAR CULTURAL SCAN



**Presented to the Castlegar Arts Council  
and the City of Castlegar**

**By: Janzen & Associates**

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# THE CASTLEGAR CULTURAL SCAN

## I. INTRODUCTION

*The Castlegar Cultural Scan* is an important initiative to provide a profile and detailing of the contributions of the arts, heritage and cultural communities to the social, cultural and economic fabric of Castlegar and to use this profiling to develop a vision of the potential of the sector. This initiative is lead by the Castlegar Arts Council with the support of the City of Castlegar and the *ArtsNow Creative Communities Program*. The City of Castlegar and the Castlegar Arts Council are both strong leaders and supporters of the arts, heritage and cultural communities in Castlegar. As part of the commitment to cultural development, the City of Castlegar outlined its approach to the sector in its Community Plan as follows:

“Cultural activities such as fine art, music, dancing and recreational and sport activities for all ages will be aggressively promoted. Development of facilities for such activities will be encouraged and supported. While the historical Doukhobor heritage will be clearly identified and supported, the community will also recognize the multi-cultural diversity of our population.” (Source: City of Castlegar Community Plan)

By undertaking this cultural development work, the following objectives are to be met:

- To get a clear picture of Castlegar’s cultural, arts and heritage assets;
- To identify its key successes and opportunities;
- To identify the gaps and needs;
- To get a clear vision of where the resources and energies of the community should be directed to meet the opportunities and needs of the arts and heritage communities; and

- To encourage more of the community to engage in creative and cultural activities.

This cultural scan is designed to be the first step in developing a comprehensive Cultural Plan for Castlegar and includes:

- A profile and inventory of the cultural, arts and heritage sectors in Castlegar which quantifies its cultural, economic and social contributions to Castlegar;
- An identification of community assets and successes;
- A needs and opportunities assessment including a facilities needs assessment;
- A comprehensive Vision Statement; and
- A set of clear strategies and actions which can be further developed in a Cultural Plan. In total there are 5 key strategic directions and 39 recommendations to advance arts, heritage and cultural development in Castlegar.

For the purposes of this review, arts, heritage and culture is inclusive of the following activities:

1. Heritage including museums and interpretive centres;
2. The visual arts including art galleries, painting, drawing, photography, pottery, sculpture, glass and fibre;
3. Crafts, fibre arts, weaving and quilting;
4. Performing arts including theatre, music, festivals and dance;
5. Film, video, sound recording and multi-media;
6. Arts and heritage supply and retail;
7. The aboriginal arts;
8. Multicultural activities;
9. Arts education and instruction; and

10. Writing, publishing and libraries.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

*The Castlegar Cultural Scan* was developed through an extensive process of consultation and research as follows:

- A review of relevant Castlegar documents including *The Castlegar Community Plan* and other materials on Castlegar organizations;
- An initial planning meeting with the Castlegar Arts Council and the City of Castlegar council members;
- The conduct of an extensive *Castlegar Cultural Scan: Economic and Community Profile, Impact and Needs Assessment* which was sent to 104 arts and heritage practitioners and organizations;
- Interviews with key community arts and heritage stakeholders; and
- The conduct of two Community Forums, the first in September, 2005 entitled, "*Developing a Cultural Vision for Castlegar*" which explored the successes, needs, gaps and opportunities and a second forum in November entitled, "*Implementing Castlegar's Cultural Vision*" which developed key strategies and concrete actions to advance Castlegar's arts and heritage sectors. Some 62 individuals and organizations attended these meetings.

## **III. CASTLEGAR CULTURAL SCAN**

### **A. Profile and Inventory**

The Castlegar Arts and Heritage community is a diverse community representing every arts, heritage and cultural endeavour including museums, interpretive centres, art galleries, an extensive array of visual arts (including photography, painting, pottery, sculpture, woodwork and glass), crafts, theatre, dance, festivals, music, film/video, multi-media, sound recording, the literary arts,

libraries, aboriginal arts, arts education and instruction and multi-cultural art and heritage. There are a documented 105 non-profit organizations, individuals and companies involved in arts and heritage endeavors in Castlegar. In addition, a number of social service agencies such as Family Place deliver important services in this area. Selkirk College which now also delivers the programs of the Kootenay School of Arts is an important local player. Of particular note is the impressive number of individual artists (60) resident in Castlegar in the visual arts area representing everything from painting, to sculpture, glass and woodworking. This group, which represents the single largest endeavour, is represented primarily by individual artists who operate out of home studios.

**CASTLEGAR ARTS AND HERITAGE SECTOR  
BY GENRE AND SUB-SECTOR**

	<b>Non Profit Organizations and Educational Institutions</b>	<b>Individual Artists and Companies</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Museums/Heritage and Interpretive Centres</b>	3	0	3
<b>Visual Arts (Art galleries, painting, sculpture, glass, wood working, photography)</b>	3	60	63
<b>Crafts (including quilting and weaving)</b>	2	7	9
<b>Writing (including books and poetry)</b>	0	7	7
<b>Dance</b>	1	1	2
<b>Music</b>	3	5	8
<b>Theatre and Festivals</b>	2	0	2
<b>Film/Video/Sound Recording/Multi-media</b>	0	1	1
<b>Arts/heritage retail supply</b>	0	1	0
<b>Art Instruction and Other (i.e. social service agencies, youth delivering some services</b>	4	5	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	18	87	105

\*Source: Castlegar Arts Council

The non-profit sector provides valuable arts and heritage services to Castlegar residents. Some of the arts and heritage players are as follows:

- *The Doukhobor Village Museum* is an international cultural tourism draw and a premier cultural asset in Castlegar. It introduces the public to Doukhobor culture and its unique lifestyle as it evolved in the Kootenay region of British Columbia from 1908 to 1938. Over 1,000 artifacts represent the pioneering, fascinating arts and crafts, customs and religion and the people. It also features an orchard near the original settlement of 1908. There are extensive displays, facilities, school-based and adult programmes including Doukhobor craft items, music, films and art displays by Doukhobor artists. Nearby are other features of historical interest such as the Doukhobor Suspension Bridge built by hand in 1913, a National Heritage Site, and the scenic tomb of the charismatic leader Peter V. Verigin, near Brilliant, the site of the original settlement.
- *The Selkirk Weavers' and Spinners Guild's Demonstration Centre* features some of the best weaving and spinning in the world and is located at the Doukhobor Village Museum. For over 30 years volunteers have taught classes, held exhibitions, undertaken "living history" demonstrations and participated in cultural outreach programs. They participate in Art Walk and have exhibits at the Kootenay Gallery and display and demonstrate at the Pass Creek Fall Fair.
- *Castlegar Quilter's Guild* holds a quilt show every second year and makes quilts for charity. They have given donations to the Castlegar Hospice Foundation, to Talarico Place and a scholarship to a Selkirk College student.

- *The Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ Cultural Interpretive Society (USCC)* is a group of women whose mission is to preserve local Doukhobor heritage through the various arts and crafts of the culture. The USCC Cultural Interpretive Society is active from September to June. They coordinate classes for sewing, weaving and crafts, coordinate quilting bees, commission individual projects such as traditional Doukhobor quilts, and undertake programming which provides a history of Doukhobor pioneer life.
- *Concerts in the Park* is the premier performing art festival which operates in July and August. It provides access by the local public to local, regional, provincial and national performing arts presentations. Thousands of residents benefit every year.
- *The Selkirk College* is a key community organization which offers arts programs and is the key deliverer of the Kootenay School of Arts programming. It has the Selkirk College Library features local archival collections and a historical collection pertaining to the West Kootenays, comprising books, reports, maps and local newspapers on microfilm dating back to the late 1800s.
- *The Castlegar and District Heritage Society*: The original CPR station is now the home of the Castlegar and District Heritage Society. This important heritage asset allow the visitor to learn about Castlegar's railway and community heritage through a diverse collection and the Castlegar News archives (1947-1993). The upper floor is a step back in time. There are many collections of books, Life magazines, tools and much more. The gift shop offers visitors a variety of locally crafted souvenirs to choose from.



*Castlegar's Museum* is housed in a 90 year old rail station, one of the best preserved in the province. The station's agent's residence on the upper floor provides you with a wonderful sensation of the early 1900's. The newspaper archives will give you hours of enjoyment. The beautifully landscaped area around the front of the station is a wonderful spot to rest with accessible parking to the downtown shops.

- *Zuckerberg Heritage Park Island*: This island park offers the opportunity to discover a heritage of human and natural history unique within the Columbia River Valley. It takes back visitors several thousand years back to when the Lakes Salish people first fished and built their winter pit houses here. Almost 200 years ago David Thompson sailed down the Columbia past this island. 60 years when Alexander Zuckerberg built his unique Russian Orthodox Chapel House.

Zuckerberg Island Heritage Park offers natural beautiful and serene settings for wedding ceremonies; the grounds are beautifully landscaped to provide visitors with an instant backdrop for wedding photo's or family pictures. There is significant flora and fauna on beautifully groomed trails and fabulous views of the confluence of the Kootenay and the Columbia Rivers. It traces the past memories of the Interior Salish Indians and of Alexander Zuckerberg, along with the Chapel House.

- *The Kootenay Gallery* is a museum-standard facility with the capacity to bring high quality exhibitions to the region from museums and galleries across Canada. The gallery acts as a catalyst for artists residing in the region which serves a population of approximately 85,000 and is spread over an area of 100 kilometers. The Kootenay Gallery is a non-profit institution, governed by a Board of Directors and financially assisted by the Government of BC through the BC Arts Council, the City of Castlegar, Regional District of Central Kootenay Area J, corporate sponsors, members and donations. The total floor space of the Kootenay Gallery is

361.6m2 (3,888ft2). The Kootenay Gallery offers a variety of exhibitions each year. Exhibits of art, science and history are presented with local, national and international sources. In addition it has active programs such as a film series and school and public activities.

- *The Castlegar Arts Council* is an important umbrella organization that develops, markets and hosts the annual Art Walk for local and regional artists. The arts council also distributes the CKCA funding annually and partners with other cultural organizations to develop and promote art, culture and heritage in Castlegar.
- *The Kootenay Art Club* offers a relaxed opportunity for visual artists to paint at their own pace from June to September.

There are also a host of community organizations such as the Castlegar and District Library, Family Place and Kootenay Society for Community Living which offer arts programming.

## **B. The Cultural, Social and Economic Impact of Arts and Heritage on Castlegar**

*The Castlegar Cultural Scan: Economic and Community Profile, Impact and Needs Assessment* shows a vital sector which contributes to the cultural, social and economic well-being of Castlegar. The arts and heritage sector contributes to the local economy through cultural tourism, sales and services of arts and cultural endeavors and through local employment. The survey also showed that the contributions of arts and heritage to Castlegar's social and cultural fabric is significant benefiting children, adults and seniors and encouraging their participation as volunteers, audience members and supporters. Arts and heritage in Castlegar clearly contributes to a sense of community and quality of life for the citizens of Castlegar. 67% of all non-profit organizations reported and

22% of individuals and companies which is an acceptable level. The values identified below are therefore, conservative.

**ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE  
ARTS AND HERITAGE SECTOR IN CASTLEGAR**

<b>NO.</b>	<b>FACTOR</b>	<b>NUMERICAL VALUE</b>
1	Total Employment and Those Deriving Income from the Arts and Heritage	44.5
2	Total Employment in the Non Profit Arts and Heritage Sector	21.5
3	Total Employment of Individual Artists and Parishioners Involved in Economic Arts and Heritage Activities	23
4	Total Number of Volunteers	324
5	Total Number of Volunteer Hours Dedicated to Arts and Heritage	13,876
6	Value of Volunteer Labour	\$138,760.00
7	Total Salaries Paid in the Arts and Heritage Sector	\$793,393.00
8	Total Revenues Derived from the Arts and Heritage Sector	\$1,197,937.00
9	Total Expenditures from the Arts and Heritage Sector	\$1,155,668.00
10	Value of Collections	\$260,000.00
11	Attendance at Performances, Exhibitions, Events and Art Education Activities (i.e. classes)	34,840
12	*Memberships	9,380
13	Number of Annual Arts and Heritage Exhibitions, Performances and Events	330
14	Total Direct and Indirect Economic Impacts of Arts and Heritage on the Castlegar Economy	\$2,889,170

\*87% of the memberships were from the Castlegar and District Public Library

The arts and heritage in Castlegar are an economic generator with an estimated annual impact of \$2,889,170 on the economy. This includes an estimated direct impact of its \$1,155,668 of annual expenditures with a multiplier of 2.5 to measure its indirect impact on everything from hotels to cabs and airport activity. Total revenues for the sector were \$1,197,937. It addition, it is important to state that the arts and heritage sectors in Castlegar are extremely frugal and are financially responsible and operate with small surpluses. In addition, their

approach is one which maximizes the use of every dollar in their operations and it would be fair to say that the sector is somewhat undercapitalized.

There are an estimated 44.5 individuals that derive income from the arts and heritage sector in Castlegar. In the case of the non-profit arts and heritage sector, 21.5 individuals worked either full or part time in providing arts and heritage services to the community and \$703,393 in employment income was paid to these individuals. The survey showed 23 individual artists and companies deriving some income. It should be noted that arts and heritage activities represent a very part-time Endeavour for over 90% of the artists surveyed, with them spending an average of 15 hours per week with 79% of these respondents indicating less than \$5,000 in revenue annually and the vast majority of these under \$1,000 annually. In total the individual and company revenue for all individual artists and companies was estimated at \$175,000 annually. In total, \$793,393 was paid in salaries to individuals working the arts and heritage area in Castlegar. Virtually every individual artist was home-based and the quantification and strength of the individual artist sector is therefore quite surprising.

Volunteers are critical to the success of the sector with 324 volunteers contributing 13,876 hours of work every year ranging from service on Boards to production, marketing and fundraising. Conservatively valued these committed individuals contribute \$139,000 in work value every year. Total value of art collections totaled \$260,000, although this is likely significantly understated.

Nearly 35,000 people benefit from arts and heritage activities in Castlegar every year ranging from school tours, to performances, events, exhibitions and library related activities. This includes 29,240 at events, exhibitions and performances and 5,600 from art instruction and educational activities such as school tours. In total there are 330 arts and heritage events, exhibitions, school tours and performances every year in Castlegar. There are more than 9,300 memberships

in arts and heritage organizations although it is important to note that 87% of these were related to the library.

#### **IV. EVALUATION OF CASTLEGAR'S ARTS, HERITAGE AND CULTURAL SECTOR: SUCCESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND GAPS**

A comprehensive evaluation and assessment of the arts, heritage and cultural approaches was undertaken through three key mechanisms. Firstly, a public forum entitled, *"Developing a Cultural Vision for Castlegar"* was held which received important input on questions of strengths, gaps, opportunities and recommendations for action. Secondly individual interviews were conducted of key stakeholders in the arts and heritage community. Finally, the community survey asked a number of questions related to arts and cultural needs of the community.

*"The Cultural, Social and Economic Impact of Arts and Heritage on Castlegar"* explored many aspects of arts and heritage in Castlegar. 76% of all respondents indicated that they felt that Castlegar has made moderate progress in arts and heritage development in the last decade, 17% indicated significant development and 7% of respondents felt there had been no development or were not able to assess.

The following key questions were considered at the first community forum on September 28, 2005 and asked in another form on the community survey:

#### **What are the key strengths and assets of the Castlegar arts and cultural community?**

- Arts council
- Individual artists
- Weaver's guild

- USCC
- Parks and trails
- Strong moral support from City council – they appreciate arts and culture
- Historical Society
- Choirs
- Dance groups
- Selkirk College
- Book club
- Kooteney Gallery including the film series
- Photo club
- Concert in the park
- Seniors Centre
- Communities in Bloom
- Bridges
- Doukhobor culture
- Private sector galleries
- Verigin's Tomb
- Castle Theatre
- Library
- The Island
- The Doukhobor Museum and Doukhobor culture
- The Brilliant Culture center (seating)
- Mir Peace Centre
- Castlegar and District Heritage Society CPR Railway Station
- Band shell
- Ethnic diversity and multiculturalism
- The airport
- Cost of living
- Geography and location (central)
- Seasons and quality of air and water

- Rotary clubs
- Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance (Columbia Basin Trust)
- Some churches have cultural programs
- Concerts and Kinnaird Park
- Castlegar News is very supportive
- Gyms with bleacher seating
- College library, coal and archival collection
- Volunteers
- History
- Kinnaird Middle School
- A community with a big heart
- Cohesive community
- Government
- Economic resources – the Dams
- Japanese Student Exchange
- Columbia Basin Trust
- The will of the people to keep things going and that arts and culture matter

**What are the key gaps of the Castlegar arts and cultural community?**

- Under-utilized Brilliant Cultural Centre with acoustic issues and public perception and access issues
- Facility for the performing arts with a need for proper stages and sound and seating
- Three major groups (museums, gallery) funded by the City with others waiting and wanting
- Community looks at Nelson as arts town, Castlegar as sport
- City of Castlegar and other websites (e.g. Chamber) do not promote the arts and culture
- Performing arts series

- Under-developed Castle Theatre
- Regional competition: Nelson and Trail
- Bookstore
- Lack of cultural municipal policies in the arts – need a council member with cultural portfolio
- Downtown core life/cultural activity and community identity
- Artistic orientation and supporting artists
- Community education
- Public transport
- Misconceptions of the arts and a lack of interest
- Arts education
- Community choir
- A lack of an arts and cultural vision
- Money, financial resources
- Audience development
- Local small theatre and group
- Lack of cooperation
- Lack of an image in arts and culture
- Lack of arts marketing and promotion
- Lack of arts planning

**What do you think are the opportunities of the arts and cultural sector and where would you like it to be in the next 10 years? What are your hopes and aspirations for the arts and cultural community?**

- We're number one
- Performing Arts Centre
- Revitalized and promoted downtown using the arts and heritage
- Enhanced library
- Enhanced museum and area



- Re-activated Castle Theatre
- Cultural green spaces (parks and band shell)
- Effective cultural marketing
- Youth engagement
- Doukhobor Festival
- Integrated cultural efforts and more partnerships
- Paid municipal position and cultural liaison
- To join together in culture and cross cultural experiences
- Blending with respect for individuals and traditions
- Create a new history
- Financial with the Olympics
- Identity, unity and awareness
- Providing educational arts opportunities especially for children
- Secure, increased and predictable funding
- Castlegar citizens are supportive, culturally aware and involved
- Arts and culture developed to the extent that tourists come off the road into town and that Nelson residents come here too.
- Support from restaurants, hotels and that the arts and cultural sector supports them in return
- Full and coordinated program of arts (music, fine arts, performance) in all schools
- Enhancing the relationship between the Selkirk College and the rest of the arts and heritage community

When asked about **facility needs**, the majority of respondents clearly identified a need for a multi-use arts and cultural facility to serve the entire community including the performing arts and the visual arts as well as the need to address ongoing capital upgrade needs for organizations such as the Doukhobor Museum, Kootenay Art Gallery and the Railway Museum. Important elements of facility needs included the following:

- Performing arts space which can accommodate theatrical, dance and music
- The visual arts and opportunities for exhibition and sale
- Seating in the range from 350 to 500. This is also supported by a review of other communities. Facilities of a larger number would not be financially feasible and are not necessary. Larger events can be held at the Brilliant Centre
- Preparation and rehearsal space
- Shared studio space for artist cooperatives
- Visitor spaces
- Shared meeting and board space
- Storage space
- Adequate parking
- A focus on facilities to support local, grassroots activities
- No immediate need to address studio space areas for individual artists as they have indicated the desire to retain their home-based operations. Need exists for some shared studio space, exhibition and retail to support economic activities and sales
- An appropriate location which can support downtown development, contribute to beautification and ensure good access. Some suggestions for location included the Castle Theatre, Kinnaird School, and attachment to existing recreational facilities
- Supported by a full business plan case to ensure long term sustainability
- Rental costs which ensure accessibility by fledgling to more developed organizations
- Address ongoing capital needs for existing organizations such as the Doukhobor Museum, the Railway Museum and Kootenay Art Gallery
- Address upgrade of the community Band Shell to enhance music performances in the summer.

## V. MODELS

*The 100 Best Art Towns in America: A Guide to Galleries, Museums, Festivals, Lodging and Dining (The Countryman Press, 2005)* is a published work by international travel and art expert John Villani. It describes 100 small and large towns in the United States and Canada that offer authentic and unique art experiences. There is also an additional listing of the top large 10 Art Towns with a population of over 30,000 and small 10 Art Towns of less than 30,000. Nelson has been on the small art town list and this year Salt Spring Island is the only Canadian town on that list, being number nine. This section outlines 4 Canadian towns on the overall list, including Nelson which was identified as one of the top small art towns in North America in past publications. Lessons from these jurisdictions point to a key lesson: Play to your strengths and offer authentic arts experiences.

### **Salt Spring Island, British Columbia:**

While the full-time islander community numbers slightly more than 10,000, during the summer weekends that number can easily double. This being an island with limited job opportunities, the community includes hundreds of artisans engaged in everything from crafting goat cheese to writing Hollywood scripts, as well as a number of internationally famous entertainers making regular trips to Vancouver's airport for early flight to Los Angeles. As the publication indicates, "Salt Spring operates as a magnet for established Canadian artists in much the same way that Sante Fe, New Mexico, does for artists in the United States. This is a fantastic place to live, especially if what you need to do to make ends meet is work like mad in your studio all week long, then call FedEx to pick up your creative output (paintings, rings, carved totems, glass bowls, and the like) and deliver those treasures to the five or six art galleries representing your work." (page 442) Salt Spring Island features a very successful self-guided studio tour that takes place from Salt Spring's northernmost tip right down to the ferry

landing and Fulford Harbour. More than 30 artists participate with every imaginable art, craft or home furnishings objective available, supported by widely distributed tour maps. The main cluster of art galleries is concentrated in the village of Ganges which also features an extraordinary Saturday Market. Overall there is a strong visual arts presence of both an art gallery of the arts council and private galleries.

The artistic heart of the island is “ArtSpring Island Arts Centre” is a contemporary hillside structure in Ganges that serves as a multidisciplinary performing and visual arts facility for the island’s resident arts community as well as the venue for performing artists and entertained from across Canada. ArtsSpring’s 270-seat theatre is an ideal setting for dance, drama and music, while its adjacent art gallery spaces provide the island with its best venue for large-scale painting and sculpture. The Salt Spring Painters Guild hosts the annual exhibition of Alliance of Salt Spring Artists and the island’s resident drama company, Graffiti Theatre Company, stages its four annual productions at ArtSpring. It also has a strong festival program which operates in July and features everything from local music and comedy to performances by Acadian dancers from Canada’s eastern provinces. Festival ArtSpring, which stages its events across the first half of August, strives for a different terrain with a program that includes chamber music, Broadway sing-alongs and Shakespeare.

Lessons to be learned from Salt Spring are:

- Harness the potential of the individual artist
- Market yourself an “artist” destination – living and working
- Develop the arts community from the ground up and the grass roots
- Recognize the draw of a beautiful natural environment and its link to the artist
- Be authentic
- Provide a broad range of artistic experiences, year round

- Be responsible and reasonable in capital planning
- Play to your strengths

### **Antigonish, Nova Scotia**

This community on Nova Scotia's Sunrise Trail is home to one of Canada's premier Catholic colleges, St. Francis Xavier University. Antigonish, with a population of 4,700, is populated with visual and performing artists who choose to live there because of the remarkable beauty and the many amenities of living in a college town. The community's location on St. George's Bay means that lobster and salmon are readily available, while St. Francis Xavier provides teaching jobs for many of the best local artists.

The arts council uses a strong regional approach to feature its population Gathering of the Arts. There are summer musical performances at the Chisholm Park Gazebo and outdoor sculpture marks the outdoor walking trails. Live music is a focus as well as a spring to fall that uses a local auditorium for a performing-arts series touring classical, jazz, and world musicians. Theatre Antigonish uses the 200 – seat Bauer Theatre for its winter season of five plays using students as well as local performers. The community's premier summer arts event is Festival Antigonish, a 15-year old celebration of Canadian theatre talent that runs practically nonstop for two months on three stages. Festival Antigonish serves as a summer getaway for many of the top actors and technical experts connected with Halifax's vibrant stage scene. A series of children's theatre performances is part of the mix, as is a main stage series.

Lessons from Antigonish are as follows:

- A regionally cooperative approach
- Creating an environment for artists to live and work
- The benefits of public art
- An active and year round performing arts sector

- A reasonable and responsible approach to capital
- Harnessing the potential of the individual visual artist
- Developing mutually advantageous relationships with a local university.

### **Baie St. Paul, Quebec:**

Baie St. Paul is located in the Eastern Canada Charlevoix region and has long been a magnet for French Canadian painters, sculptors and fine crafts artists. It has a population of 7,300. Artists have settled not only among the garrets of Baie St. Paul's eminently walkable historic district, a place filled with galleries, ateliers, cheese shops and delis selling Montreal-style bagels, but have also fanned out to nearby communities. It has developed into a destination of legendary stature. Mr. Villani says that it is due to "the integrity with which local artists of all styles, be they contemporary sculptors or traditional landscape painters, conduct their professional activities. But it also has to do with the amazing and unexpected way the local arts scene continually reinvents itself and expands upon its successes. Certainly, galleries (as well as restaurants) come and go. But what's also taking place here involves major investment in the development of summer fine arts festivals and in arts infrastructure. It's been a slow, methodical process, but through the steady application of effort, Baie St. Paul has developed a first-rate selection of fine arts venues and an irresistible array of must-see events that are liberally sprinkled across the height of its May to October tourist season." (page 452)

The most impressive visual arts amenities in Baie St. Paul are Le Centre d'Art and the Centre d'Exposition. Both are actually part of the same cultural complex, though each has an independent role. The Centre d'Exposition is a three-level, contemporary arts museum with its own permanent collection and a year-round exhibition program focused on local, national and international shows. Many of Canada's best contemporary artists have shown their work here, and the facility also stages major shows of historical art. The Centre d'Art has a more localized

focus, with a year-round series of lectures and workshops as well as a for-sale art gallery. The main event on Baie St. Paul autumn arts calendar is Reves d'Autonme, a two week arts festival arts that features performances, street painting and instructional art workshops, while the summer's highlight is the August long-contemporary arts symposium, competition and exhibition held at Le Centre d'Art and the Arena.

Lessons from Baie St. Paul are as follows:

- Building a vibrant arts community over time through sustained effort
- Utilizing the natural landscape as attraction for visual artists to live and work
- Maintenance of the historic character of the town
- Linking the arts to other lifestyle related endeavors such as food and fashion
- A strong performing arts community
- A strong approach to regional, provincial, national and international links in the arts
- A strong capital infrastructure approach.

**Nelson, British Columbia** has previously been awarded one of the top 100 Art Towns in North America. It is noted for its significant grassroots development of arts and culture. This community has retained and restored its historic assets which has also created a unique “look” for the community which is integrated with authentic and creative retail and dining experiences.

Its Capital Theatre is an important historic and community asset having been constructed in 1927 and acquired by the City of Nelson in 1983 and developed to be a major centre for arts and cultural uses. The Capitol Theatre had its grand re-opening on April 17, 1988. Now gilt-framed illuminated murals and painted roses warm the walls. Ornate organ lofts, transformed into functional balconies,

grace the extended apron of the stage. The original proscenium arch has been restored to original Art Deco beauty by a European plasterer. Ceiling corbels, modeled in fiberglass by a high school class, and a large original chandelier recapture some of the charm of the original movie house. The house is 426 seats divided into three sections, left, centre, and right. It has an extensive visual arts community with a strong, annual Artwalk program. The Nelson Museum and Art Gallery will be undergoing significant renovation and is a key historic asset. Cultural tourism opportunities are provided through a Farmer's Market, Streetcar, Parades Streetfest and Japan promotion. There has been significant work undertaken in the cultural tourism area.

Lessons learned from Nelson include the following:

- The role and contributions of individual artists who come and work and live in Nelson
- The power of grassroots development
- The value of retaining historic assets
- The power of linking arts and culture to retail and dining experiences.

## **VI. A CULTURAL VISION FOR CASTLEGAR**

Through the consultative approach, the following Castlegar Cultural Vision has been developed:

“It is our vision to grow and develop our arts, heritage and cultural community from the grassroots, by encouraging performances and exhibitions, building on our strong heritage and providing access to our community through an Arts and Cultural Centre. It is our vision to grow the economic contributions of arts and heritage through cultural tourism and to contribute to the social and cultural fabric of our community.”



## **VII. STRATEGIES, RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS**

The following five strategies and key directions have been developed through extensive consultation. They would form the framework of a full Cultural Plan and would be developed over the period of five years. Through the Cultural Planning process, a full financial plan should accompany a formal long-term plan. Overall, there are 39 recommendations.

### **Strategic Direction #1: Creating a Strong Planning and Development Framework**

In order to develop an overall, long-term and well-thought out approach, a strong planning framework is necessary. These recommendations reflect a strong commitment to planning:

1. Develop a comprehensive Cultural Plan using this information as a base. Ensure that a 5-Year Cultural Plan includes a detailed financial plan.
2. Establish and Arts and Heritage Policy for the City of Castlegar.
3. Establish an arts and heritage coordination position in the community. It could be with the city as part of an economic development position or with other bodies such as the Recreation Commission. The function of the position would be to undertake arts and heritage planning, marketing, partnership development and coordination for the Castlegar arts and heritage community. It is recognized that this would likely be part-time.
4. Retain and expand the role of the City Council position on Arts and Culture.
5. Integrate the arts and heritage in a more detailed fashion into the next Castlegar Community Plan.
6. Create an Arts and Culture Steering Committee to oversee the above work.
7. Working with the community, build greater capacity for fundraising.
8. Undertake the review of current approaches to funding and develop a more formal approach with a detailed funding framework related to areas

such as capital and arts and heritage programming. The framework should provide formal policy statements, program purpose and guidelines for access as well as a clear decision-making and accountability framework. The focus should be on clearly thought out programs with establish and fiscally responsible budgets.

9. Integrate arts and heritage into city planning and consider the use of design (storefronts) to create a unique look for Castlegar and in particular an Arts and Cultural Precinct.

## **Strategic Direction #2: Addressing Facilities and Infrastructure Needs**

It is clear from the community forums, interviews and surveys, addressing facilities and infrastructure needs is a priority. The focus for the community is to provide a local facility to grow the arts community, to maximize the use of current assets already available and to ensure long-term financial sustainability. The following are the recommendations:

10. Undertake the development of a formal Castlegar Arts and Culture Centre feasibility and planning study with the following elements:
  - A multi-use facility
  - A 350 to 500-600 seat theatre suitable for all performing arts (theatre, dance and music) with acoustic and stage elements
  - Space for exhibition and sale of visual arts.
  - A full business plan articulating construction costs and potential revenues, a long-term operating financial plan covering expenses and revenue sources and a management/operating plan articulating recommended management structure. Ensure financial accessibility for a wide range of arts and cultural groups in Castlegar.

- Undertake a location analysis which can maximize access and attract tourism to downtown Castlegar and which will be a cultural hub of activity.
- Develop a formal approach to deal with ongoing capital issues from existing arts, heritage and cultural issues.
- Develop an approach to deal with the need for a new Band Shell.
- Work with the Brilliant Centre to provide a more enhanced use for larger events.

### **Strategic Direction #3: Enhancing Arts and Heritage Production**

Building greater arts and heritage capacity and ensuring a year-round season of arts and heritage events and activities.

11. Expand arts and heritage opportunities with Selkirk College.
12. Establish a Winter Performing Arts Season, working in cooperation with existing performing arts organizations in Castlegar.
13. Build on the cultural strengths of the area and provide focus to choral music (Doukhobor and other groups), establish formal music festival with choral groups from around the province.
15. Establish Public Art policy and approach.
16. Build on the successful summer festival.
17. Work with schools and the educational system to provide more formal opportunities such as “Artists in Residence” programs in schools.
18. Look at the feasibility of establishing a Castlegar Multicultural Festival of Culture and Food.
19. Establish a formal visiting artists and touring approach.

### **Strategic Direction #4: Packaging the Economic Potential**

The review has identified cultural tourism and economic opportunities as significant in Castlegar.

20. Explore the possibility of an Arts District or Arts Precinct in the downtown core to support business development.
21. Establish formal arts signage program and improve signage for major tourism attractions.
22. Attract artists to live and work in Castlegar.
23. Promote the coordinated arts entrepreneur – a guide to home studios. Events such as art studio or home studio days.
24. Develop a Castlegar heritage approach through coordinated marketing and inclusion of heritage related opportunities such as “The Bridges of Castlegar” and capitalizing on the Doukhobor culture. Work with organizations such as the Doukhobor Museum to expand cultural tourism opportunities.
25. Establish “Art and the Environment” approach such as “Art in the Park”, “Culture on the Columbia”.
26. Develop partnerships with restaurants, hotels and business establishments to display artwork and feature music.
27. Develop an expanded partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the arts.
28. Cross promote with sports and other activities.
29. Encourage the location of arts related businesses in Castlegar.
30. Develop a formal festivals approach, including a festivals policy as part of the overall Arts and Culture Policy.
31. Develop expanded partnerships with organizations such as the Library and the College.
32. Develop enhanced youth arts and heritage opportunities.
33. Develop a cultural marketing approach; market the sector on the City website, expanded Chamber website and consider a sector wide marketing insert into the newspaper.

34. Enhance regional cooperation. Look at strong examples such as the “Okanogan Corridor” cultural tourism initiative to package arts, heritage and cultural tourism opportunities in a regional context.

### **Strategic Direction #5: Communication and Organizational Development**

Through the review a commitment to on-going communication, organizational development, partnership development and community-building in arts and heritage was identified.

35. Develop a formal inventory of arts and culture for electronic access.
36. Undertake research on funding at the provincial and federal level and make this information accessible to the community.
37. Undertake a set of arts and culture get-togethers on a periodic basis to provide for opportunities to network and share.
38. Develop a regular communication mechanism (Arts and Heritage Calendar of Events) which is electronically available and an arts and heritage calendar of events. This could be an expanded version of the Chamber Website.
39. Determine areas for professional and organizational development and undertake them.