

# Report to Council



**Date:** April 11, 2016  
**File:** 1200-15  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Sandra Kochan, Cultural Services Manager  
**Subject:** 2016 Creative Spaces Consultations

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives for information the report dated April 11, 2016 from the Cultural Services Manager regarding the 2016 Creative Spaces consultations.

## **Purpose:**

To provide Council with information about a survey and series of focus groups which will provide data and information about the space needs of artists and organizations in Kelowna.

## **Background:**

[Kelowna's 2012-2017 Cultural Plan](#) (Goal 3) describes a number of strategies supporting a goal to identify more and different kinds of affordable spaces devoted to creative production for both visual and performing artists. Community consultations during and after development of the Plan reveal a continuing, unmet need for flexible rehearsal and performance spaces, studios for active fabrication and flexible meeting and gathering spaces.

Recent data indicates that existing performance and rehearsal spaces at two major civic facilities, the [Kelowna Community Theatre](#) and the [Rotary Centre for the Arts](#), are at or near capacity. Studio spaces at the Rotary Centre for the Arts are fully leased, with many studios already being shared by two or more artists. These studios are not designed for active or heavy fabrication involving chemical processes, large machinery or high temperature kilns. In the last several months privately-owned collective studio spaces have become available - anecdotal information indicates that the spaces are in high demand.

Although there are other theatre spaces in the community, they are either privately owned or part of School District 23 infrastructure. Large performance groups such as orchestras and choruses are often challenged to find suitable and affordable rehearsal space when they need it.

On March 14, 2016, City Council approved the [Civic Block Land Use Plan](#) which will guide future development of various sites in the Cultural District and the area around City Hall. The Plan reflects the community's interest in enhancing the vibrancy of the Cultural District and has launched a conversation about the future of the Kelowna Community Theatre and other aging buildings in the area.

Finally, the [Okanagan Centre for Innovation](#), located within the Cultural District, is under construction, scheduled for completion in late 2016. A public 100 seat theatre on the first floor of the building, along with the second floor which will contain digital classrooms, office space for non-profits and the technology incubator Accelerate Okanagan along with some potential new uses will be available in November. A total of 24,000 square feet of public space will be made available.

In view of the long-range planning undertaken in the Civic Block Plan, the advent of new facilities such as the Centre for Innovation, and current knowledge about facility usage, there is a high level of interest in looking at the future of Kelowna's cultural infrastructure, and how, in partnership with others, the City can best serve the needs of a changing arts and culture sector and a growing community.

In order to prepare for an update of the Cultural Plan in 2017/2018, and to better understand the space needs of the creative community, Cultural Services will be conducting an information-gathering process in 2016 consisting of:

1. Creative Space Needs and Issues Survey (2016 Q2)  
Loosely modeled on the survey tool created by the Arts Habitat Association of Edmonton in 2010, the City of Kelowna will distribute a comprehensive survey which will elicit detailed information from artists and organizations about their space usage and requirements. The survey will reach individuals and organizations and will add depth and authenticity to the City's understanding of space requirements for different art disciplines ranging from stage-based art forms such as dance and music to studio practices involving specialized equipment.

The objective is to reach as deeply as possible into the community to seek out information from individual artists and practitioners who may not be part of the City's current network of contacts.

The survey will be available from the date of project launch for a period of approximately three months.

2. Focus Groups (2016 Q2)  
A consultant will assist the City with a series of facilitated conversations in focus groups with various disciplines and sectors. Broad participation from invited individuals, non-profit organizations, educational agencies and private businesses operating within a particular discipline will be a key objective (for example, private dance schools, non-profit dance organizations, individual dancers and choreographers). Privately owned venues are also considered as stakeholders for these conversations.

The following outcomes are anticipated:

- Information about the type of spaces used/available
- Understanding of space related issues/challenges
- Identification of opportunities for collaborative space sharing
- Discipline-specific space requirements
- In conjunction with the survey, development of an inventory of existing or potential creative production spaces

Because space requirements for different art disciplines are highly variable, a series of focus groups is proposed including:

- Dance
- Visual Art
- Theatre
- Acoustic Performance (choral, instrumental, spoken word)
- Amplified Music Performance (any genre)
- Screen Based (video, photography, animation, film)
- Fabrication Arts/Makers (art or artisan production requiring specialized equipment)
- Schools/Education (primarily those schools specializing in arts education or schools which have specialized production or presentation spaces)

### 3. Learning and Inspiration (2016 Q3/4)

Toward the end of the year, the City of Kelowna will convene the creative community to:

- Share key findings from the consultations and survey;
- Hear from and be inspired by others who have developed successful models for creative production space elsewhere in Canada; and
- Brainstorm 'made-in-Kelowna' solutions.

All of the information gathered throughout 2016 will provide important background and context for future work in updating the Cultural Plan, and in commencing the long journey toward analyzing the feasibility of new or improved cultural infrastructure.

#### **Internal Circulation:**

Director, Active Living & Culture Division  
Communications Supervisor  
Community Engagement Consultant

#### **Existing Policy:**

This report is submitted pursuant to Council Cultural Policy 274 and Engage Policy 372.

#### **Financial/Budgetary Considerations:**

Costs for the survey, focus groups and convening are to be paid from existing Cultural Services budget and will be approximately \$15,000.

#### **Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Legal/Statutory Authority  
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements  
Personnel Implications  
External Agency/Public Comments

Alternate Recommendation  
Communications Comments

Submitted by:  
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**Approved for inclusion:** J. Gabriel, Division Director, Active Living & Culture

cc:  
Director, Active Living & Culture Division  
Communications Supervisor  
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