

# Report to Council



**Date:** July 21, 2025  
**To:** Council  
**From:** City Manager  
**Subject:** Cultural Plan Development Process  
**Department:** Cultural Services Department

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## **Recommendation:**

THAT Council receives, for information, the report from the Cultural Services Manager dated July 21, 2025, regarding the process for development of an updated Cultural Plan;

AND THAT Council endorses the Cultural Plan process as outlined in the report from the Cultural Services Department dated July 21, 2025.

## **Purpose:**

To receive an overview of the process that will be undertaken in the development of the next iteration of the City of Kelowna's Cultural Plan.

## **Background:**

Kelowna's first Cultural Plan (2012–2017) was launched in 2012 to foster and integrate local culture across all neighbourhoods. Building on that foundation, the City approved its second Cultural Plan in 2019, which has guided the community's arts, culture, and heritage development from 2020 to today.

The 2020–2025 Cultural Plan has driven significant progress. Despite the global pandemic, major arts organizations remain strong, new groups and venues have appeared, and strategic initiatives like the Cultural Facilities Master Plan, Central Okanagan Music Strategy, and Inspired City Summit have positively shaped the city's cultural development.

As Kelowna continues to undergo notable social, economic, demographic, and environmental shifts, we are initiating the development of the next Cultural Plan. This new plan will build upon the successes and lessons learned from previous strategies, while addressing emerging challenges, evolving community values and long-term objectives. Aligned with Kelowna's Official Community Plan (OCP 2040) and the principles established in Imagine Kelowna, the updated Cultural Plan will guide municipal investments in cultural infrastructure, programming, and organizational support for the future.

While the core goal areas of the current plan are expected to remain foundational in the updated Cultural Plan, strategies will be refined to better reflect current conditions and future priorities. Some goal areas may be elevated in importance based on community needs and interest holder input throughout the engagement process.

### **Discussion:**

Development of the Cultural Plan will be led by the Cultural Services Department in collaboration with cultural planning consultants Patricia Huntsman Culture + Communication. The six-phase approach includes:

Phase 1: Project Initiation and Pre-Planning – Spring/Summer 2025

Goals: Ensure clarity of roles and activities, confirm engagement activities, participants and project timelines.

Phase 2: Background Research and Review – Summer 2025

Goals: Landscape review, scorecard development, cultural mapping and development of engagement materials.

Phase 3: Public Engagement and Data Collection, Interest Holder Engagement – Fall 2025

Goals: Inform the community of the process and participation opportunities, gather detailed insights to validate understanding and opportunities in the sector, encourage visionary thinking, provide engagement opportunities. Additional Report: *Release of 2025 Economic Impact Assessment Report*

Phase 4: Plan Development and Content Creation – Winter 2025-2026

Goals: Engagement data analysis and synthesis and initial draft of Cultural Plan and Implementation Roadmap. Additional Report: *2020-2025 Cultural Plan Final Report Card*

Phase 5: Review and Refinement – Spring 2026

Goals: Validate vision, priorities and recommendations with interest holders. Update the vision, priorities and recommendations for the Draft Plan and Implementation Strategy.

Phase 6: Reporting, Documentation and Implementation Support – Summer-Fall 2026

Goals: Ensure the community is thoroughly informed about the finalized Cultural Plan and actively begin the implementation process, providing clear guidance on next steps and actions for both City staff and interest holders.

### Supplementary work that supports plan development

In addition to the Cultural Plan, two supplementary reports will be prepared to inform the Cultural Plan. These reports will involve the collection of a variety of qualitative and quantitative data from a variety of sources. Consultation with arts, culture and heritage organizations (not-for-profit and for profit), artists and art consumers will be required to populate the data included in these reports.

- 2020-2025 Cultural Plan Final Report Card – tracking progress and reporting on the successes and challenges of the 2020-2025 Cultural Plan. This report card builds on the Progress Report Card prepared at the midway point of the current plan's implementation. The expected completion is Winter 2026.

- 2025 Economic Impact Assessment of the Creative Sector – This project will evaluate the creative sector’s economic contribution to Kelowna, consider social return on investment, and create an easy-to-update formula for tracking cultural economic data and performance metrics over time. The expected completion of this report is late Fall 2025.

#### Community and Indigenous Engagement

A robust engagement and communications framework is being developed to guide inclusive, meaningful participation and dialogue throughout the planning process. Rooted in the City’s Engage Policy and the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, this framework emphasizes:

- Inclusion of equity-deserving communities, individual artists, and underrepresented groups
- Co-creation and shared ownership of the plan’s vision
- Clear, accessible, and multi-format communication and engagement methods

The process is being developed by considering the best practices used in the development of other municipal cultural plans and in consideration of engagement methods to fill gaps identified in the 2020-2025 Cultural Plan.

Llana Teichroeb, a nsyilxcen language speaker and member of Westbank First Nation, brings her cultural knowledge and commitment to inclusion and reconciliation as the Indigenous Advisor on the project. Her role supports the inclusion of Indigenous voices and perspectives as central in the planning and decision-making processes.

#### Interest Holders and Ecosystem Approach:

Building on the City’s 2020–2025 Cultural Plan, this process identifies and engages a broad spectrum of interest holders representing Kelowna’s creative ecosystem, including: Arts and cultural non-profits

- Individual artists and collectives
- Heritage organizations
- Business improvement areas and tourism
- Economic development and social wellness sectors
- Cultural diversity and inclusion groups
- Environmental and recreation partners
- Internal Working Group of impacted departments
- A Community Working Group of 18–22 participants

A variety of different community-based engagements will occur from summer 2025 to fall 2026.

#### Progress updates

The process outlined above is anticipated to start in July 2025 and extend through to September 2026. With Council’s approval of the process, staff will update Council on progress at these key points:

- Delivery of Cultural Report Card
- Presentation of Economic Impact Assessment Report
- Council workshop and review of draft goals and strategies
- Final plan review and adoption

**Conclusion:**

In summary, this comprehensive approach ensures that the Cultural Plan is shaped by diverse voices, thorough analysis, and periodic council engagement, fostering a process that is both inclusive and strategic. The anticipated timeline, key deliverables, and ongoing evaluation demonstrate a commitment to creating a vibrant cultural future for the community—one that is continually informed by data, collaboration, and evolving best practices.

**Internal Circulation:**

Active Living and Culture  
Communications

**Considerations applicable to this report:*****Existing Policy:***

Council Policy No. 274 identifies the development and regular update of the Cultural Plan as follows:

**Cultural Plan**

The City will develop and regularly update a Cultural Plan to guide civic cultural initiatives.

The process for the Cultural Plan will include:

- Information gathering from, and consultations with, local interest holders and the community-at-large. This may take the form of surveys, workshops and/or Open Houses;
- Review of best practices and comparable plans from other jurisdictions;
- Preparation and submission of a document which will establish an overall vision, goals, specific strategies and an implementation plan.

The Cultural Plan will require on-going implementation, monitoring and review.

***Financial/Budgetary Considerations:***

The Cultural Plan, and the related documents, will be funded through the existing Cultural Services operating budget and the additional one-time project funding already approved in the 2025 and 2026 budgets.

**Considerations not applicable to this report:**

Legal/Statutory Authority  
Legal/Statutory Procedural Requirements  
Consultation and Engagement  
Communications Comments

**Submitted by:**

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**Approved for inclusion:**

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