

CITY OF AIRDRIE

Cultural Policy

Effective Date: October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Revision Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By: CITY COUNCIL

Approved On: October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Resolution #: 2015-C-344

**PREAMBLE**

The City of Airdrie articulates in its AirdrieONE Sustainability Plan that arts, culture and recreation are key pillars in the sustainability of Airdrie. It states, a “community that is connected to art, culture and recreation is a community that cares for and stewards its people and environments. Arts, culture and recreational events and facilities are vital to making social connections between various groups in the community and contribute to Airdrie’s sense of identity, place and community. More than just entertainment, arts, culture, and recreation provide the means for community to express itself in a variety of ways in a variety of formal and informal venues.” The overall goal of this policy is to identify, celebrate and build on our current cultural resources while creating conditions to unlock the potential that clearly exists.

**Cultural Vision:**

The City of Airdrie takes pride in its roots, its natural environment, its cultural heritage built by past generations, the diversity of its contemporary cultures, and the creative work and accomplishments of its artists. It nurtures a unique sense of place by celebrating, supporting, and preserving its abundant cultural resources ensuring that its residents and future generations can benefit from a healthy, stimulating, and unique cultural environment that fosters a sense of pride, identity, belonging, and openness to the world for years to come.

**Cultural Values:**

The City of Airdrie values:

- the importance of culture as an agent in articulating our sense of community and identity through ongoing creative and cultural activity;
- the power of culture in channeling the creative process in all of us, in connecting people, in challenging people, and in communicating ideas;
- the role of all cultural constituencies –professional, non-professional and emerging – in the personal development of people of all ages throughout the city, whether they are active or passive participants in Airdrie’s cultural sector; and

- the contributions of its many cultures adding to the city's cultural mosaic, and recognizing the diversity of cultural and creative processes.

## **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. formally establish the place of culture in the life of the community, and as such, to acknowledge all aspects of culture (the Arts, Ethno-Culture, Heritage) as a means by which the City commits to enhancing the quality of life for citizens and visitors;
2. define the role of the City in community development utilizing cultural sectors (the Arts, Ethno-Culture, Heritage);
3. assist the City in its decision-making with respect to investment, in-kind assistance, programming, promotion, and communications; and
4. assist in articulating the rationale for cultural services offered by the City through its operational structure to its customers.

## **SCOPE**

### **DEFINITIONS:**

#### **Creative Capacity**

The ability of an organization, community or city to generate ideas, goods and services including the strength of creative assets and resources of an organization, community or city.

#### **The Arts**

Includes artists and all forms of creative expression, formal and informal as well as art for profit and art 'for art's sake' (not for profit) and creative cultural industries. Includes the arts sectors recognized as Performing Arts, Literary Arts, Visual Arts and Applied Arts and is associated with both end product and the process of creation.

#### **Culture**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1982) describes culture as the "whole complex of distinctive spiritual, materialistic, intellectual, and emotional features that characterize a society or group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, fundamental human rights, value systems, traditions and beliefs." The World Commission on Culture and Development distinguishes usefully between two domains in cultural policy: meaning and symbol, or, the intangible and tangible elements of culture, respectively.

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'Culture' refers collectively to three main elements:

- **The Arts** – (see definition for 'The Arts' above);
- **Ethno-Cultural** - organizations, people, values and shared traditions of people from a certain place; and
- **Heritage**.

### **Creative City**

The Creative City concept is a framework of city planning developed by Charles Landry. The framework embeds a 'culture of creativity' into how urban stakeholders operate by encouraging creativity and legitimizing imagination within the public, private and community spheres to broaden ideas, possibilities and potential solutions to any urban problem.

### **Creative Cultural Industries**

Creative activities that have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and utilization of intellectual property.

### **Heritage**

Broadly understood as the inheritance of a community that helps define its identity. Heritage can be categorized into:

- Built heritage (physical objects including buildings and everyday objects)
- Natural heritage (The environment and significant landscapes)
- Cultural heritage (products of humankind, like festivals)
- Intangible heritage (including oral histories, beliefs, languages and attitudes)
- Documentary heritage (documents, records, artifacts, and images)

### **Public Art**

Artistic creation or collaborations in any medium whether fixed or freestanding, permanent or temporary, within external or internal settings, intended to be freely accessible to the general public, including works developed under the City of Airdrie's Public Art Policy.

### **Placemaking**

Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being.

**POLICY:**

**Guiding Principles**

The following principles are meant to serve together as a guide to practice and decision-making as policies and planning are implemented.

**1. Culture plays a leadership role in the future of Airdrie**

City Council recognizes and is committed to support the significant role culture and creativity will play in Placemaking and meeting the challenges of building a healthy, safe, caring and vibrant creative Airdrie of the future.

**2. Artists and cultural sector workers are welcome and supported in Airdrie**

Culture, art and artists thrive where there are positive attitudes, energetic peers, a spirit of cooperation and collaboration, voracious audiences, the resources necessary to do great work, and high profile support. A key indicator of community health and creative capacity will be the extent to which Airdrie can attract, retain and develop artists and cultural workers and the perception that Airdrie is a 'Great place to create, celebrate and work'.

**3. Arts and Culture are accessible and engage as many Airdrie residents as possible.**

It has been shown that quality of life is greatly impacted by citizen engagement in cultural activities. Engagement includes attending, viewing or participating in professional or amateur cultural activities such as festivals, public art, and through meaningful learning opportunities about culture and art forms in educational programs. Opportunities for engagement are accessible when they are diverse, yet meaningful to the people of Airdrie and their everyday lives.

**4. Airdrie's cultural community is recognized for their excellence and contribution**

Airdrie's cultural community has many artists, historic community builders, creative cultural? industries that receive critical acclaim for the quality and scope of their achievements. Despite the many other benefits to Airdrie of a thriving arts and culture community, the intrinsic value of art and culture are cherished and celebrated.

**5. Unique and authentic characteristics of Airdrie's history, culture and arts scene are identified and strengthened**

Airdrie is a relatively young city with a strong sense of history and community whose rapid growth has been fuelled by proximity to a major centre of business with its own strong identity and sense of history. Life in Airdrie is influenced by its proximity to Calgary but is shaped by its physical environment, the spirit of entrepreneurship that drives our economy, and more and more by the experiences of people from increasingly diverse geographies and cultures. Airdrie's cultural scene reflects our sense of identity, place, values and what makes us unique and is an important part of who we are, and will be, as a community.

**6. Stakeholders cooperate and create connections to realize our full potential as a creative city**

Collaboration is facilitated by purposefully creating connections across geographies, cultural sectors and disciplines, economic sectors, within the City Corporate structure and with community agencies focused on other aspects of the community. A cooperative approach to infrastructure investment initiatives and determining strategic priorities for the sector will assist in bringing the resources of new supporters to Airdrie's culture related priorities.

**7. The cultural sector is recognized as an important part of Airdrie's vibrancy as a creative city**

A thriving cultural sector (Arts, Ethno-Diversity, and Heritage) is itself an indicator of a healthy and balanced city with the capacity to deal with many of the challenges of growth. The City of Airdrie believes that the cultural sector makes a significant contribution to Airdrie's economy and provides potential economic growth opportunities through the development of tourism, local consumption and direct employment through cultural activities and development and delivery of cultural products and events. Along with increased economic impact, arts and culture have the potential to increase social inclusion, improved physical, mental and emotional health and wellness and provide significant opportunities for learning.

**8. Cultural (Arts, Ethno-Cultural, Heritage) considerations are included in municipal planning**

Airdrie recognizes the significant impact that art and culture has in its development from its natural heritage to public art, park spaces and in creating added value in the development of capital projects. Art and Culture are not an 'added piece' of planning, but an essential piece of an integrated planning process.

**9. The City of Airdrie and its partners maintain accountability when making Arts and Culture related investments**

Airdrie citizens expect due-diligence from the leaders to make sound investments that will improve the quality of life in Airdrie. All partners in this initiative will strive to maintain transparent processes, good governance, and the measurement of and reporting on investment outcomes.

**10. The City of Airdrie will use municipal investments in Arts and Culture to actively leverage investment from other levels of government and other sectors**

Research shows that cities that make the cultural sector a priority, with a clear vision and plan to benefit its citizens draws other supporters to the table. In this way, the City of Airdrie through programs like the Public Art Program can support the establishment of partnerships and investment into the cultural community.

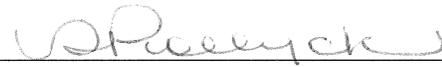
**11. Investments made in the Arts community are focused on long term growth and sustainability of the sector as a dual responsibility of funders and cultural organizations.**

The City of Airdrie and its partners will work to increase the level of resources available to the cultural community in Airdrie with the expectation that an equivalent commitment to

sustainability principles will be upheld from the organizations and community groups it supports. This marks a clear commitment by the City of Airdrie to the long-term growth and sustainability of arts and culture in Airdrie.



Mayor



City Clerk