



ARTS MATTER Advocacy Campaign PEC Municipal Election 2022

The Arts Matter in Prince Edward County! In the lead up to the Municipal Election on October 24th, [County Arts](#) (aka the Prince Edward County Arts Council) is spearheading the Arts Matter campaign to ensure the arts and its many benefits are top of mind for Prince Edward County candidates. Our main actions are:

1. Informing candidates about the significant positive impact of the arts and artists in our community
2. Inviting candidates to reflect on and share with County voters how, if elected, they will help realize the Municipality's vision of Prince Edward County as a "centre for arts and culture" (as stated in the 2021 Official Plan)
3. Recommending that the Municipality take the following first steps towards achieving this vision:
 - a. **Double investment in arts and culture initiatives in 2023 to \$136,332** (or 0.0002% of the Municipal Budget)
 - b. **Adopt further measures to generate new, sustainable sources of funding for arts and culture initiatives**

About County Arts

County Arts' mission is to enrich the community by actively supporting and promoting the arts and artists as an essential part of life in Prince Edward County. Our vision is that Prince Edward County is recognized as one of Canada's top arts destinations, where the arts thrive and all artists can reach their full potential, contributing to quality of life and sense of belonging. As an arts service organization, we provide programs that benefit a membership of over 400 artists, galleries, arts organizations, and community arts participants and patrons.

Each year, County Arts' signature programs: generate over \$1 million in direct and indirect economic benefits including upwards of \$250,000 in art sales; are attended by 15,000 people; engage 50+ volunteers; and provide income-generating opportunities for over 200 artists and arts businesses.

In the first 7 months of operation for our new community arts hub the County Arts Lab, we have: engaged over 200 participants in arts activities, created over 30 new teaching jobs for artists, and by the end of the year will have paid artists over \$25,000 in teaching fees.

Why do the Arts Matter to PEC Residents & Businesses?

The arts improve our quality of life - 8 major indicators of health and well-being (including physical health, mental health, stress level, and overall satisfaction with life) are strongly connected to attending, or participating in, cultural activities (Hill Strategies). To date, 100% of participants in our County Arts Lab community programs reported that their participation had a positive impact on their well-being.

The arts strengthen our economy - County artists are entrepreneurs, business owners, and job creators who spark innovation, help attract visitors, and play a vital role in our rural creative economy. The County was ranked 9th out of 100 cities in Moneysense.ca's "Canada's Best Places for Arts and Community 2017" report, due in part to our high proportion of workers in the arts, entertainment and recreation sector (3.1% in 2017 - on par with Stratford, ON). According to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, "Arts, culture and heritage improve the ability of municipal governments to influence local economic development by attracting and retaining a skilled and talented workforce". The County's 2016 Corporate Strategic Plan recognizes that "cultural amenities are an effective tool in the attraction of new residents, visitors and business investment when leveraged effectively".

The arts educate - 97% of County Arts Lab's adult participants report having gained new perspectives or skills thanks to their participation in our community arts programming. At-risk students involved in the arts, compared with students who had little or no arts exposure, have higher secondary school graduation rates; higher overall grade-point averages; higher math grade-point averages; higher test scores in science and writing; and are more likely to pursue post-secondary education (National Endowment for the Arts).

The arts bring us together - As storytellers, community builders, and problem solvers, artists and the arts have the power to connect us to each other and this special place. In these times of upheaval and friction, artists and the art they create is glue that can bond us in a more sustainable, resilient ecosystem that will withstand inevitable shifts in appetites and agendas. Arts, culture and heritage enhance understanding and capacity for action; build social cohesion; contribute to community development; and foster civic participation (Hill Strategies Research).

What are the Municipality's current arts-related commitments?

A number of arts- and culture-related commitments appear in the 2021 Official Plan (p. 47 and p. 57), compelling the Municipality of Prince Edward County to, among other actions:

1) Recognize the tremendous contribution that arts and culture make to the County's quality of life and local economy by **promoting and supporting local artists, arts and cultural organizations**, and by **maintaining and developing culturally-related community**

facilities such as museums, heritage and cultural centres, archives and libraries.

2) **Work with public and private partners** to enhance Prince Edward County's role as a centre for arts and culture.

3) To enrich the lives of residents and to attract visitors, **support the development of arts, heritage and cultural programs, cultural businesses and industries, festivals, workshops, events, arts trails, organizations and associations** throughout the County.

4) **Provide space** within existing community-owned buildings to meet the needs of the arts, culture and recreation community, and will support the development of new facilities for developing and showcasing arts, culture and recreation.

5) **Recognize and support the contributions** that Arts & Culture and associated artists, organizations, festivals, events, industries and businesses make to the year-round economy (Objective 11)

6) **Recognize and enhance the role Arts & Culture play** in strengthening community pride and social activity (Objective 12)

7) **Include and incorporate the perspectives of traditionally underserved and Indigenous groups** within the arts and culture community (Objective 14)

State of the Arts

Despite the numerous and multifaceted benefits Prince Edward County artists and arts organizations bring to our community, many are facing ongoing and significant financial obstacles. In our 2021 Artist Survey, the top challenge to developing artists' practice was financial precarity, a concern echoed in our Spring 2022 survey, in which artists and arts and culture businesses ranked income stability (e.g. maintaining sufficient cash flow, attracting new or returning customers, cost of living) as their top obstacle to success.

Moreover, while the pandemic brought increased awareness of the power of the arts to comfort, heal, and connect us, the sector has been among the hardest-hit industries over the past 2.5 years. Arts and culture workers faced myriad disruptions and revenue losses, and economists predict it will take up to 5 years for the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sector to recover.

The 0.001% - Recommendation to Double PEC's Arts Budget

We greatly appreciate the Municipality's current support of the arts - for example, through in-kind use of municipal facilities, online promotion of arts events, and supporting arts initiatives through the Municipal Community Grants Program.

However, on average only **0.001%** (or **\$2.56** per resident/year) of the Municipal Operating Budget is allocated to arts initiatives through the Community Grants Program. For comparison purposes, Stratford and Kingston spent \$3.56 and \$4.36 per capita (respectively) on the arts through their equivalent programs in 2022.

Beyond community grants, Ontario municipalities have adopted a range of **innovative arts funding mechanisms**. To mention a few:

- Property developers in Guelph are required to pay [Community Benefits Charges](#) (4% of the property's land value) which support a variety of initiatives within the [arts and culture](#) realm, including funding to the Guelph Arts Council
- Municipalities are using a portion of Municipal Accommodation Tax revenues to fund arts and cultural events (examples: [Huntsville](#), [Kingston](#), [St. Catharines](#))
- Through Toronto's [Percent for Public Art Program](#), 1% of the capital budget of all major municipal buildings and structures is dedicated to public art, and the city encourages a public art budget of 1% of gross construction costs on private developments
- Toronto's [Billboard Tax](#) has generated \$1m+ in new funding for arts initiatives since 2009 (funneled through the Toronto Arts Council)
- Developers can receive an additional exemption of 10% of the municipal development charges related to building in the downtown Hamilton area if they make a dollar for dollar contribution to the [Downtown Public Art Reserve](#).

Given all of the above, County Arts recommends that the Municipality:

- **Double investment in arts and culture initiatives in 2023 to \$136,332** (or 0.0002% of the Municipal Budget)
- **Adopt further measures to generate new, sustainable sources of funding for arts and culture initiatives**

These relatively small yet significant steps would represent an important starting point for our shared journey towards establishing Prince Edward County as a vibrant and bustling arts destination, where all artists can reach their full potential, contributing to our community's quality of life and sense of belonging.

Sources

[-Prince Edward County 2016 Corporate Strategic Plan](#)

[-Prince Edward County 2021 Official Plan](#)

- The Culture, Arts, Heritage, and Sport [Economic Impact Model](#) (Government of Canada)
- [Business Retention and Expansion Initiative - Arts, Entertainment and Recreation 2018-19 Report](#) (County of Prince Edward)
- [Covid-19 Recovery in Hardest Hit Sectors](#), Mckinsey & Company (July 2020)
- [The Arts and Individual Well-Being in Canada: Connections between Cultural Activities and Health, Volunteering, Satisfaction with Life, and Other Social Indicators in 2010](#) (Hill Strategies, 2013)
- [Social Effects of Culture: Exploratory Statistical Evidence](#) (Hill Strategies, 2018)
- [The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth](#) (National Endowment for the Arts, 2012)
- [City of Kingston Arts Fund 2022 Grants](#)
- [City of Stratford 2022 Budget](#)
- [City of Stratford 2022 Community Grants](#)