



Excerpts from Municipality's [2025 Budget Engagement Summary](#)

Prepared by County Arts (PEC Arts Council)

Summary of What We Heard

The 2025 Budget Consultation survey received 275 responses.

The 275 responders indicated that **long-term care, affordable housing, fire and emergency services, and road maintenance** were the highest on residents' priority lists.

95% of respondents were full-time residents

The majority of residents indicated that they want the County to keep tax increases at an inflationary level in order to maintain current service levels

Trending ideas to improve the community included **funding for the arts, road maintenance, more affordable housing and waste collection**

Question 6 – What services would you like to see expanded or enhanced?

Highlights/trending responses under “What services would you like to see expanded or enhanced?”

- Road maintenance and replacement
- Housing and affordable housing
- Funding for the arts
- Indoor and outdoor recreation facilities as well as recreation opportunities

Out of 275 Have Your Say 2025 Municipal Budget survey respondents:

- 60% ranked funding the community grants program as a priority (under which funding for the arts falls, although the arts were not specifically identified in the survey question)
- 53% ranked funding cultural facilities as a priority
- 70% ranked funding libraries as a priority

Question 21 - Do you have a project or idea to improve your neighbourhood or community that you would like to see the municipality pursue?

Highlights/trending responses under "Do you have a project or idea to improve your neighbourhood or community that you would like to see the municipality pursue? "

- Road maintenance and repair
- Arts funding
- Affordable housing
- Waste collection

Appendix A

Below is a detailed look at the responses to Question 6 – What services would you like to see expanded or enhanced?:

- Support the arts more. PEC's per capita support of the arts is poor, despite the County's use of the arts to promote tourism and life here. Kingston does a much better job, on a per capita basis, than PEC. Particularly distressing was the current budget's elimination of financial support for the Prince Edward County Arts Council and the Regent Theatre Foundation, both elemental parts of this community.
- money to the arts council
- Funding for the arts, libraries, parks/green spaces, affordable housing, climate change initiatives.
- Consistent and enhanced community grants to local nonprofits like the ROC and County Arts
- funding to PECs cultural sector including non-profits is essential not only for permanent residents but also tourists. I would like to see stable and sustainable funding to the PEC Arts Council, the Public Library, the museums, the Department of Illumination.
- This municipality needs to commit to consistent Arts funding seeing how the arts are essential to attracting and keeping folks here. The trend of divesting arts funding from pillar arts orgs is deeply troubling and the lack of a separate envelope of arts funding (ie just lumping arts in with the deeply underfunded community grants programs) is also embarrassing for a municipality that speak of the "tremendous contribution" the arts make to community life here.
- Increased funding for the arts.

- Support the arts, not with words, but with actions.
- Work to support the arts organizations in PEC.
- Embarrassing that 11 of 14 Councillors reported supporting enhanced funding for Arts but have stripped then stripped it of funding.
- develop stable and sustainable lines of funding for arts and culture in PEC.
- I am extremely disappointed by a gaping hole in these efforts: there is no mention of the arts, and no opportunities for residents to advocate for the arts as a priority in our community. Here are just a few of the Municipality's recent commitments to supporting our local arts community: "The County shall 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 (...) The County will work with public and private partners to enhance Prince Edward County's role as a centre for arts and culture. To enrich the lives of residents and to attract visitors, the County will support the development of arts, heritage and cultural programs, cultural businesses and industries, festivals, workshops, events, arts trails, organizations and associations throughout the County." (Official Plan 2021) 2023-26 Strategic Plan Goal: "Identify and celebrate The County's vibrant heritage, arts and cultural assets by encouraging creative activation of our heritage and cultural spaces" Yet - unlike in other regions that place a high value on their strong arts and culture scene, the Municipality of Prince Edward County: Does not offer its own arts programming Does not allocate any dedicated funding to support the arts Does not provide operating funding to local arts organizations or offer any grant funding for individual artists Provides the local arts organizations whose programs and services fill the resulting gaps with just one potential source of (project-based only) funding: the Municipal Community Grants Program But in 2024: Arts-related grants awarded through the Municipal Community Grants program were slashed in half, with just \$32,000 in grants supporting local arts initiatives in 2024. This translates to an investment of \$1.25 per capita, or 0.0005% of the municipality's 2024 operating budget. Several local arts and culture organizations had their applications denied, including The Regent Theatre and - for the first time in their organization's memory - County Arts (the Prince Edward County Arts Council), who play key roles in supporting and promoting artists and our local creative ecosystem. Just \$146k was allocated to the Municipal Community Grants program overall (grant requests totalled \$390k), meaning the Municipality spent under \$6 per capita through this program to support our hardworking - and struggling - community sector. While we know that the program has undergone changes over the years and is currently being restructured, there is an alarming overall trend: while the operations budget has increased 40% since 2018, the Community Grants envelope (arts grants included) has not kept pace with the budget, inflation, or our population growth; and

instead has decreased over this time period. Moreover - the provincial and municipal arts funding landscape is very bleak, leaving our local arts organizations with little to no access to other government funding. For example, County Arts' only operational funding (\$13,000 or 2.9% of their budget) comes from the Ontario Arts Council, whose own funding has remained stagnant since 2009. Now more than ever - local government support is essential to the survival of our arts community. Without reliable and meaningful support for the arts from the Municipality, our community stands to lose powerful, essential arts initiatives that heal, enhance lives, instill a sense of place and belonging, inspire joy and awe, and drive the economy (County Arts alone generates \$1.6 million per year in direct and indirect economic impact) in our community. The arts are a high priority for me, and I want to live in a community that follows through on our mandates to support the arts with meaningful, impactful financial commitments at every opportunity, and provides strong support to our community sector overall.

- As you make decisions during the 2025 budget deliberations, the current restructuring of the Community Grants Program, and other key inflection points, can I count on you to advocate for: 1. Increased funding for the Municipal Community Grants program that keeps pace with inflation and population growth; is set through a transparent process; and reflects the true, immense value of our hardworking nonprofit sector? 2. Increased arts funding levels that are commensurate with the Municipality's commitments, including through securing reliable funding for arts organizations? Thank you for helping me make the arts a priority for our community. I look forward to your response, and thank you for your consideration.
- Unlike in other regions (like Kingston, Prescott-Russell, and Peterborough) that place a high value on their strong arts and culture scene, the Municipality of Prince Edward County: Does not offer its own arts programming Does not allocate any dedicated funding to support the arts Does not provide operating funding to local arts organizations or offer any grant funding for individual artists Provides the local arts organizations whose programs and services fill the resulting gaps with just one potential source of (project-based only) funding: the Municipal Community Grants Program I would like to see more arts funding in Prince Edward county.