

CulturePlan:

A Cultural Strategic Plan for Kitchener

Report to Kitchener City Council

Prepared by Donna Cardinal of Cardinal Concepts for the

Arts and Culture Advisory Committee

June 1996

This project has been supported by the
Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation

For copies of this report, please contact

Mike Price, Manager
Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division
City of Kitchener
P. O. Box 1118
Kitchener ON N2G 4G7
Phone: (519) 741-2503; Fax (519) 741-2723
E-mail: beaudry@hookup.net

Letter of Conveyance

June, 1996

Mayor Christy and
City of Kitchener Councillors

Dear Members of Council:

We have been pleased to undertake, at your request, the preparation of a cultural strategic plan for the City of Kitchener. Our recommendations are contained in this document.

It has been a privilege for us to undertake this task. There is a large and active arts and culture community in Kitchener made up of people very committed to both their work and the City's future. We encountered many people not directly involved in the cultural community who recognized the value of arts and culture and the contribution they make to the livability and economic future of our city. This provides a sound base on which to build the next phase of Kitchener's cultural development.

As well as a privilege, our task has been a major challenge. The issues and concerns for arts and cultural development are diverse and complex, as are all matters for which the City develops public policy. We have sought to balance the aspirations of citizens for a culturally rich Kitchener with the economic realities of the times in which we live. We feel we have done so in the recommendations that follow.

The preparation of CulturePlan has involved many people who have given voluntarily of their time, talent, imagination and vision. We express our gratitude to them, and hope that we have reflected their passion, good will and commitment in the pages that follow. We also express our gratitude to Donna Cardinal of Cardinal Concepts for her leadership in designing and implementing a truly community-based, participatory process for accomplishing our task. We extend particular thanks to Mike Price and Astrid Braun of Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division, without whose assistance our work could not have been completed.

We urge you, the Mayor and Councillors, to endorse the recommendations in this report. We believe that the recommendations as presented are within the means of the City, and that by endorsing them Council will encourage in a very tangible way the considerable voluntary investment citizens already make in arts and culture. We count ourselves among those who stand ready to act on the implementation of these ideas.

Sincerely,

J. Michael Carty

Georgina Green

Robert Achtemichuk

J. Ronald McGill

Don Bourgeois

Betty Recchia

Deborah Budd

Stuart Scadron-Wattles

Alan Daniel

Kitty Strite-Gatto

Executive Summary

In 1993 Council appointed a group of citizen advisors for arts and culture, requested that they assess the state of arts and culture in Kitchener, and then formulate a cultural strategic plan that would provide City Council with guidance in making decisions that affect the investment of City resources--money, personnel, facilities, etc.. The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, with representation from City Council and the Parks and Recreation Department, comprised the study team.

The study team, in partnership with Donna Cardinal of Cardinal Concepts, designed an open and participatory process in which ideas for cultural development were generated by citizens (not by experts)¹, and which included public review of the ideas prior to their presentation to Council.

The recommendations that follow speak to where we want to go as a community, and why; how our vision for Kitchener might be accomplished, and what roles might be played by the City Council, the Advisory Committee, various City departments, and prospective community partners. Lastly, we have sought to address the questions of how we might assess the progress we are making, over time, in the realization of these goals.

We discovered that the people of Kitchener have a vision for a city in which the arts and culture are strong and valued components of our day to day lives; where people of all ages explore their creativity and express their uniqueness at all levels of accomplishment; where the year is punctuated by festivals; where our revitalized downtown highlights the arts and culture activities and amenities; where ongoing cultural and arts activities contribute to our distinct sense of place, to the quality of life of residents, and to our attractiveness to businesses and visitors; and where, through our experiences with the arts, we have learned to value and celebrate our diversity while working together toward shared purposes.

We uncovered a set of core values to guide cultural development in Kitchener. We value quality of life for residents; imagination as an infinitely renewable resource; a distinctive sense of place; participation in the city's public life; participation in the global community; and the particular gift of the original creative artist.

Principles underlying all the goals, initiatives, and actions of CulturePlan include: citizen initiative and City support; building on what already exists; building incrementally toward the vision; involving multiple partners; using existing City processes; and being ready to act when opportunities arise.

¹ The ideas in CulturePlan were generated by fifty residents who elected to take part in response to a very broadly disseminated invitation from the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee. They worked together for four full days in October and November, sharing initially their concerns for cultural development, then their images of those concerns well-addressed. Eight teams formed around future images shared by team members. These teams developed their detailed scenarios and action plans, and discovered that all scenarios harmonized into a shared vision for culture in Kitchener. This process of Enspirited Envisioning was developed by Warren Ziegler of the Futures-Invention Associates International, in Denver. One of its most lasting outcomes is the degree of ownership and self-authorizing action that is generated by those taking part. We see this in the number of initiatives that have already begun, through the efforts of the citizens who envisioned them and offered them to the CulturePlan community. For more information about Enspirited Envisioning, contact Donna Cardinal, Cardinal Concepts, 9120 - 64 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T6E 0H7 Tel 403-434-2635 Fax 403-434-3078 Email: cardinal@web.apc.org

We are recommending that City Council adopt the vision, values, and principles referenced above, and the following six goals for cultural development. For each goal we have suggested actions to achieve the goal, and recommended that City Council request the involvement of appropriate City departments and existing advisory committees.

The goals of CulturePlan are to:

- A. Strengthen the municipal cultural infrastructure;
- B. Encourage creation of arts-based festivals and celebrations;
- C. Incorporate an arts and culture focus into downtown revitalization;
- D. Augment existing cultural facilities;
- E. Support increased awareness of the arts within the community and increased communication within the arts sector; and to
- F. Monitor progress toward goals for arts and cultural development

To strengthen municipal cultural infrastructure, we propose establishing the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee on a permanent basis; establishing a cultural storefront for City operations; and augmenting arts and culture staff.

To encourage creation of arts-based festivals and celebrations, we propose supporting the creation of an annual arts festival; supporting the creation of an annual multi-tiered visual arts celebration; supporting efforts toward establishment of an International Richard Wagner "Ring Cycle" by the year 2000; supporting the creation of a series of public sculptures composed of old pieces of industrial machinery and artifacts, as a celebration of Kitchener's cultural heritage; and supporting the creation of a river of fountains as a celebration of the Grand River.

To incorporate an arts and culture focus into downtown revitalization, we propose creating a "Kilometre of Culture" in the downtown core; supporting establishment of a Children's Museum in the downtown; investigating the creation of "back alley galleries" as part of laneway development in downtown; and enhancing the greening of downtown.

To augment existing cultural facilities, we propose supporting the creation of a performance venue of 300 - 450 seats; and investigating the creation of an outdoor Amphitheatre.

To support increased awareness of the arts within the community, and increased communication within the arts sector, we propose supporting a Hands-on-the-Arts Fair; supporting the development and implementation of an Appreciation Series; expanding the City's Artist in Residence Program; supporting the creation of an information delivery system for arts and culture, and endorsing the continuation of periodic Salons or informal receptions focused on arts and culture.

To monitor progress in arts and cultural development, we propose establishing an ongoing, community-based, participatory process to monitor progress toward the goals of CulturePlan.

Summary of Recommendations

- Recommendation 1: that City Council adopt a vision for arts and cultural development in Kitchener, and incorporate it as appropriate into the Municipal Plan.*
- Recommendation 2: that City Council adopt the core values to guide cultural development, and incorporate them as appropriate into the Municipal Plan.*
- Recommendation 3: that City Council adopt the principles to guide City departments in their work on the goals and initiatives for cultural development, and incorporate them as appropriate into the Municipal Plan.*
- Recommendation 4: that City Council adopt the six goals for arts cultural development, and incorporate them as appropriate into the Municipal Plan.*
- Recommendation 5: that City Council approve the establishment of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee on a permanent basis, and request Parks and Recreation to prepare a committee mandate for Council's consideration.*
- Recommendation 6: that City Council approve the establishment of a cultural storefront for City operations, and request the Parks and Recreation Department to investigate suitable locations.*
- Recommendation 7: that City Council approve in principle the desirability of augmenting arts and culture staff, and request the Parks and Recreation department to take this into account in their personnel planning.*
- Recommendation 8: that City Council endorse this report's recommendation to create an annual arts festival, and request appropriate involvement by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation and the Downtown Events Promoter.*
- Recommendation 9: that City Council endorse the initiative taken by citizens and support provided by Parks and Recreation in creating an annual multi-tiered visual arts celebration.*
- Recommendation 10: that City Council support efforts toward development of an international Richard Wagner "Ring Cycle" by the year 2000, and request appropriate involvement by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation and other relevant agencies of the City.*

- Recommendation 11: that City Council support the creation of a series of public sculptures composed of old pieces of industrial machinery and artifacts, and request the appropriate involvement of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation and Public Art Committee.*
- Recommendation 12: that City Council investigate the feasibility of creating a river of fountains as a celebration of the Grand River, and request the appropriate involvement of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation, Public Works and the Public Art Committee.*
- Recommendation 13: that City Council approve the creation of a Kilometre of Culture as indicated on the accompanying map; incorporate it as appropriate into the Municipal Plan; and request appropriate involvement of Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development, Public Works and the Downtown Action Team.*
- Recommendation 14: that City Council support the establishment of a children's museum, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation and the Downtown Action Team.*
- Recommendation 15: that City Council investigate the creation of back alley galleries as part of laneway development in downtown, and request appropriate involvement by the Downtown Action Team, Planning and Development and Parks and Recreation.*
- Recommendation 16: that City Council enhance the greening of downtown, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation, the Downtown Action Team, community partners and citizen proponents.*
- Recommendation 17: that Council support the creation of a performance venue of 300 - 450 seats, and request appropriate involvement by The Friends of St. Jerome's and the Board of The Centre In The Square.*
- Recommendation 18: that City Council investigate the creation of an outdoor amphitheatre as a venue for outdoor performances of all types, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation.*
- Recommendation 19: that City Council support the creation of a Hands-on-the-Arts Fair, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation.*
- Recommendation 20: that City Council support the development and implementation of an Appreciation Series, and request the appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation.*

Recommendation 21: that City Council approve in principle expansion of the City's artist in residence program, and request appropriate involvement by the Arts and Culture Advisory committee, Parks and Recreation and the Public Art Committee.

Recommendation 22: that City Council approve in principle the City's participation in the creation of an information delivery system for arts and culture, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation and Information Systems.

Recommendation 23: that City Council commend the organizers of the arts and culture Salons for the initiatives they have taken in this regard, and congratulate them on their success.

Recommendation 24: That City Council approve the establishing of an ongoing, community-based, participatory process to monitor progress toward the goals of CulturePlan, and incorporate it into the mandate of a permanent Arts and Culture Advisory Committee.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Conveyance	
Executive Summary	i
Summary of Recommendations	iii
I Introduction and Background	1
II Vision, Values and Principles	3
III Goals, Initiatives and Actions	9

Appendices

Appendix 1	Terms of Reference for CulturePlan Study
Appendix 2	Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Members
Appendix 3	CulturePlan Participants
Appendix 4	Outreach Document
Appendix 5	Schedule of Public Meetings
Appendix 6	Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division Activity

I INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction and Background

City Council is called upon to make decisions concerning cultural development, of both annual and strategic significance. The Municipal Plan provides general guidance, but not guidance specific to arts and cultural development. In 1993, Council appointed a group of citizen advisors for arts and culture, and requested that they assess the state of arts and culture in Kitchener, and then formulate a cultural strategic plan that would provide City Council with guidance in making decisions that affect the investment of City resources--money, personnel, facilities, etc.

The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee conducted a survey of arts and culture activity and needs in 1994, and then convened an arts conference to identify the concerns and aspirations of persons involved in the cultural community. In 1995, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee initiated a cultural strategic planning process to develop a vision, values, goals, action steps, strategic targets and potential partners in cultural development in Kitchener. (See Appendix 1) The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, with representation from City Council and the Parks and Recreation Department comprised the study team. (See Appendix 2)

The study team, in partnership with Donna Cardinal of Cardinal Concepts, designed an open and participatory process in which ideas for cultural development were generated by citizens (not by experts), and which included public review of the ideas prior to their presentation to Council. As a result, the vision, values, principles, goals, initiatives and actions that follow incorporate and reflect the work of a group of fifty Kitchener residents who selected themselves to be part of the process in response to an open invitation by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, and who have taken strong ownership of the ideas presented here. (See Appendix 3) One participant calculated that the time invested by citizens in CulturePlan amounted to a contribution to the City of \$40,000.

Once the ideas for cultural development had been generated, a public consultation process was designed and implemented. The ideas were written up and widely distributed, together with a response form and announcements of a series of public meetings. (See Appendix 4) Eight meetings were held, with invitations targeted to seniors, business people, educators, community associations, cultural executives, performing artists, visual artists, and the general public. (See Appendix 5) By these means, another hundred people heard and responded to the ideas developed by their fellow citizens, and offered their own ideas.

In preparing this cultural strategic plan for Kitchener, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee has taken into account all of what we heard in public meetings, in CulturePlan workshops, in one on one consultations with citizens and staff, and in our own deliberations as a committee. The recommendations that follow speak to where we want to go as a community, and why; how our vision for Kitchener might be accomplished, and what roles might be played by the City Council, the Advisory Committee, various City departments, and prospective community partners. Lastly, we have sought to address the questions of how we might assess the progress we are making, over time, in the realization of these goals.

**II VISION, VALUES, AND PRINCIPLES FOR ARTS AND CULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT**

Vision

We discovered that the people of Kitchener have a vision for a city in which the arts and culture are strong and valued components of our day to day lives. In this vision,

- arts and cultural opportunities are available throughout the city for people of all ages to explore their creativity and express their uniqueness at all levels of accomplishment from recreational involvement to professional commitment;
- the year is punctuated by festivals that celebrate our collective community identity through the arts and culture;
- our revitalized downtown highlights the arts and culture activities and amenities;
- festivals, celebrations, and ongoing cultural and arts activities contribute to our distinct sense of place, to the quality of life of residents, and to our attractiveness to businesses and visitors;
- we make the most of opportunities to bring our human creativity and imagination to bear on the challenges of living in community, addressing collectively our social, economic, aesthetic, environmental, intellectual, spiritual and civic concerns as they arise; and
- through our experiences with the arts, we have learned to value and celebrate our diversity while working together toward shared purposes.

Recommendation 1: that City Council adopt a vision for arts and cultural development in Kitchener, and incorporate it as appropriate into the Municipal Plan.

Values

When we asked ourselves and one another why it was that we wanted to live in the Kitchener of our vision, we uncovered a shared set of core values. We see these as the values to guide cultural development in Kitchener.

a) Quality of life for residents.

It is important to us as residents that we have access to a full range of experiences and expressions of culture and the arts, both as a competitive advantage in attracting tourists and businesses, and as aspects of a full life lived in the place we chose to reside.

b) Imagination as an infinitely renewable resource.

In an era when many resources are finite--natural and financial resources particularly--the human imagination provides an infinite resource. In our work, we discovered a desire to bring this capacity to bear on the seemingly intractable problems not solved by our current approaches. Specifically mentioned were social problems (aimless youth), aesthetic problems (sterile downtown), and environmental problems.

c) Distinctive sense of place.

We who live here cherish those aspects of Kitchener that set us apart from other communities near and far. Celebrating our unique identity in stories, songs, theatrical productions, public events and festivals helps to remind us and inform others about our unique history, present and future.

d) Participation in city's public life.

The meaningfulness of public life is important to us, and underlies a yearning to be more involved in public decision making. The arts and artists generate symbols of our lives in their work, and invite us to respond. Accepting this concept, we see that the arts provide an avenue for relating to our city as a collective entity and participating in its re-creation decision by decision.

e) Participation in a global community.

By giving attention to the quality of life in our city, we remain an attractive and desirable place for tourists making destination decisions, and businesses making location decisions. Since cultural amenities are now essential elements in these decisions, by offering them we retain a place for ourselves as a potential player on the world stage. Without them, we don't.

f) The particular gift of the artist.

We value the particular gift of the original creative artist in bringing into sharper and clearer focus the societal dissonances and aspirations that play upon us all but go unrecognized until we pause to reflect in response to a provocative or inspiring piece of art.

Recommendation 2: That City Council adopt the core values to guide cultural development, and incorporate them as appropriate into the Municipal Plan.

Principles

Six goals for arts and cultural development are introduced on page 9. Each goal is accompanied by specific initiatives that, if undertaken, we feel will accomplish the desired goal over time. Actions for each initiative, and the civic department or committee to which it is addressed, are suggested.

As the goals took shape from our deliberations, we realized that there were principles for their enactment underlying all six goals. We felt it important to set out these principles separately, in advance of the goals themselves.

a) Citizen initiative and City support.

Except where noted, we anticipate that an initiative will originate with a citizen or group of citizens, and that the civic government will respond. That response we hope will be in both tangible and intangible forms; the intangible (moral support, encouragement, respect, openness to new ideas) often being as important as the tangible (seed funding, meeting space, administrative support, information, etc.)

b) Building on what already exists.

Kitchener has a rich and vibrant cultural community, and many organizations and individuals offering activities and facilities in the arts. We have not sought to marshal an ideal list of cultural amenities, but rather have listened to what is wanting, and wanted. The goals and initiatives that follow explicitly or implicitly build on what we already have. One consequence of this is a responsibility to nurture and strengthen the organizations and activities that exist presently.

c) Building incrementally toward the vision.

None of the following goals and initiatives was seen by us as being realized in its fullest form immediately, but rather as developing over time, as resources are available, by adding incrementally to the base that already exists. The challenge in the action plans was to realize in the short term some essential elements of the longer term vision. In this way, the essence of the vision will be recognized immediately, and thus enable more people and energy and resources to be committed to its full realization over time.

d) Multiple partners.

In keeping with our recognition of limited government resources, and the primacy of citizen initiative, we saw each of the goals and initiatives being undertaken with multiple partners. Foremost among those partners are the individual citizens who have proposed each of the initiatives that follow. They represent a considerable resource to the community and the government for Kitchener's arts and cultural development, as do the many organizations, agencies, businesses, neighbouring municipalities and other potential community partners. Except where noted, we also acknowledge the civic government as a partner in each initiative, keeping in mind that often the intangible contributions can be as valuable to the partnership as the tangible ones.

e) Using existing City processes.

We have not recommended the creation of new entities or processes within the civic government for purposes of accomplishing the goals and initiatives. Rather, we have seen them accomplished through existing civic structures (the Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division of Parks and Recreation, Public Works, the Downtown Events Promoter, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, etc.) and existing city processes (capital budget process, operating budgets, annual objectives for staff, the Municipal Plan, etc).

f) Being ready to act when opportunities arise.

Through our work over the past year, we have come to recognize that much can be accomplished through clarifying the desired outcomes and being ready to act when an opportunity presents. Except where noted, we have taken this approach to setting the pace for accomplishing the goals, rather than specifying target dates. We realize that cynics will see this approach as an opportunity for those who don't want to cooperate to avoid doing so, but we have encountered much good will within the administration and know that we are reliant on that good will, with or without target dates.

Recommendation 3: that City Council adopt the principles to guide City departments in their work on the goals and initiatives for cultural development, and incorporate them as appropriate into the Municipal Plan.

**III GOALS, INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS
FOR ARTS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Goals for Arts and Cultural Development

In our consultations with the community over the past year, five goals have emerged as priorities at this point in Kitchener's arts and cultural development. These goals are summarized below. The initiatives and actions to reach these goals are set out in the following pages.

Goals for arts and cultural development:

- A. Strengthen the municipal cultural infrastructure
- B. Encourage creation of arts-based festivals and celebrations
- C. Incorporate an arts and culture focus into downtown revitalization
- D. Augment existing cultural facilities
- E. Support increased awareness of the arts within the community and increased communication within the arts sector
- F. Monitor progress toward goals for arts and cultural development

Recommendation 4: that City Council adopt the six goals for arts cultural development, and incorporate them as appropriate into the Municipal Plan.

Goal A:

Strengthen Municipal Cultural Infrastructure

The City of Kitchener has a staff unit in Parks and Recreation responsible for arts and culture as part of a larger mandate that includes special events, programming and scheduling City Hall and leisure programs. The Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division has 3 full time staff and 2 part time staff, of which .75 of one staff position is dedicated to arts and culture. See Appendix 6 for a detailed description of programs and activities run by the Division. There are two groups of citizen advisors to City Council: the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, with a temporary mandate to develop a cultural strategic plan; and the Public Art Committee, with a permanent mandate to advise Council on public art acquisitions and placement.

To strengthen municipal cultural infrastructure, we propose:

A.1 Establishing the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee on a permanent basis.

The present advisory committee of citizens was constituted on a temporary basis to develop cultural policy for the City, and to make recommendations and provide advice to Council on matters related to arts and culture. A committee of volunteers appointed by Council, it has provided a valuable liaison between the Department of Parks and Recreation and the cultural community. A permanent committee would serve a dynamic function in providing a voice for the community and an ear to Council and staff to nurture and encourage initiatives taken by all parties to develop the cultural life of Kitchener within the region. Within the parameters of a permanent mandate the committee membership and tasks would be organic and changing to reflect priorities at any given time.

The mandate of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee would include responsibility for recommending goals for cultural development every five years, assessing progress toward those goals, setting annual priorities for the committee's work, advising City Council on arts and culture priorities in the capital and operating budgets, advising on staffing for positions with arts and culture duties, and advising Council on any other matters pertaining to arts and cultural development as may arise from time to time.

Action: We suggest that City Council ask Parks and Recreation to prepare a draft mandate for a permanent Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, and invite the input of the current Arts and Culture Advisory Committee in developing the mandate.

Recommendation 5: that City Council approve the establishment of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee on a permanent basis, and request Parks and Recreation to prepare a committee mandate for Council's consideration.

A.2 Establishing a cultural storefront for City operations.

A storefront facility for arts and culture, located very centrally and with street level access during and after business hours, will provide a new level of visibility to municipal arts and culture initiatives. The Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division within the Parks and Recreation Department offers many important services that are not always seen by the arts and culture community to be accessible. A one-stop information and communication resource centre could be the home of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, and possibly house some of the Department staff assigned to arts and culture.

Recently the Library has notified the City that they would be vacating at the end of July the space where the government bookstore has been housed. We consider this an ideal space in which to locate a cultural storefront for City operations and as a meeting place.

Action: We suggest that City Council request Parks and Recreation to investigate suitable locations.

Recommendation 6: that City Council approve the establishment of a cultural storefront for City operations, and request the Parks and Recreation Department to investigate suitable locations.

A.3 Augmenting arts and culture staff.

Many of the initiatives that follow acknowledge that primary impetus for arts and culture development will and should come from citizens, and that those citizen initiatives will be greatly assisted by the availability of practical support from the City. The forms of support that have been identified by CulturePlan participants are: meeting space, assistance with copying and mailing, information and referral within various city departments, linking with potential partners in the community, assistance with private sector fund raising, championing an idea with neighbouring municipalities, seed money, and strategic investments. All but the last two are forms of administrative support that can be made available given adequate staff. The concern here is for both adequate levels of staffing, and staff with appropriate qualifications for working with arts and culture organizations and projects.

Action: We suggest that Parks and Recreation take into account in their personnel planning the desirability of augmenting arts and culture staff, and increase staffing levels.

Recommendation 7: that City Council approve in principle the desirability of augmenting arts and culture staff, and request the Parks and Recreation department to take this into account in their personnel planning.

Goal B:

Encourage Creation of Arts-Based Festivals and Celebrations

Kitchener is well known for its annual Oktoberfest. Smaller festivals punctuate the year. Recently the Downtown Events Promoter in a report to Council identified an intent to start two additional festivals, one in spring and one in late summer, to contribute to the revitalization of downtown. One of these festivals is to be an arts festival.

A number of festivals and celebrations were envisioned by participants in CulturePlan. These would serve to highlight the depth and variety of year round culture and arts programming, and bring them into focus for both residents and visitors. In our public meetings, we heard strong support for various festival ideas, as well as some new suggestions for celebrations of the local history.

This momentum of citizen energy directed toward festivals and celebrations should be supported by the City as a way of discovering which festival proposals will catch the imagination of the residents and of potential local, national and international partners. Therefore, the recommendations in this section invite City Council to endorse the continued development of the various festival initiatives, and request that the Parks and Recreation department provide support to citizen groups wanting to continue exploration of these ideas. One of these initiatives is already underway, namely the multi-tiered visual arts celebration scheduled for September. Another may dovetail sufficiently with the Downtown Events Promoter proposal for a summer arts festival.

To encourage creation of arts-based festivals and celebrations, we propose:

B.4 Supporting the creation of an annual arts festival.

Kitchener already has the resources to take leadership in developing an annual festival (as successful as Oktoberfest) but with an arts orientation. Structured as a not-for-profit corporation with a community board of directors, such a festival would include a major event at The Centre In The Square.

Action: We suggest that the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation, the Downtown Action Team, The Centre In The Square, K-W Symphony and the K-W Art Gallery assist in identifying citizen leadership and potential community partners for an annual arts festival.

Recommendation 8: that City Council endorse this report's recommendation to create an annual arts festival, and request appropriate involvement by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation and the Downtown Events Promoter.

B.5 Supporting the creation of an annual multi-tiered visual arts celebration.

Cambridge, Waterloo and Kitchener have excellent exhibition spaces; several of them already run juried shows open to all artists in Canada. Coordinating the dates of these would provide the germ of a nationally important visual arts festival. From this base we would add shows by other organizations, special events organized by commercial art galleries, studio tours of local artist's studios, street events, and site-specific art installations to create over time a major celebration of the visual arts in Kitchener.

Action: The CulturePlan participants who proposed this festival have already begun to plan and implement it, with support provided by the Parks and Recreation department. The inaugural visual arts celebration, entitled "ArtWorks" will take place September 14 and 15, 1996, at City Hall. This is an illustration of the principle underlying all the initiatives of this goal; namely citizen action supported by department assistance.

Recommendation 9: that City Council endorse the initiative taken by citizens and support provided by Parks and Recreation in creating an annual multi-tiered visual arts celebration.

B.6 Supporting efforts toward development of an International Richard Wagner "Ring Cycle" by the year 2000.

Wagner's cycle of four operas is a major work seldom presented in its entirety because of the huge demands on talent, facilities, and finances. When it is presented, it draws visitors from around the world. Presenting the complete cycle over a period of several years will contribute greatly to economic development and tourism in Kitchener, will realize the dream of the original creators of The Centre In The Square, and will tie in with major neighbouring festivals to build on the area's "Festival Country" strengths.

Action: We suggest that the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and Parks and Recreation assist in identifying citizen leadership and potential community partners for an international Wagner festival as described.

Recommendation 10: that City Council support efforts toward development of an international Richard Wagner "Ring Cycle" by the year 2000, and request appropriate involvement by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation and other relevant agencies of the City.

B.7 Supporting the creation of a series of public sculptures composed of old pieces of industrial machinery and artifacts, as a celebration of Kitchener's cultural heritage.

This would preserve the industrial heritage of the City of Kitchener and provide an ongoing link with the past. The sculptures (eg, punch presses, sewing machines, engine lathes, drills, etc.) could be distributed through the downtown area indoors and out, mounted on pedestals and labelled with a brief description of their former use and their provenance. They would become both an extended sculpture garden and a museum without walls--perhaps the precursor of a proper museum of industrial archaeology.

Action: Again, the CulturePlan participants who proposed this initiative have already approached the Public Art Committee, and are now contacting potential donors of vintage machinery. We suggest that the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and Parks and Recreation assist in identifying citizen leadership and potential community partners, and that Parks and Recreation and The Public Art Committee incorporate this initiative into scheduled projects where an industrial sculpture might be an appropriate element.

Recommendation 11: that City Council support the creation of a series of public sculptures composed of old pieces of industrial machinery and artifacts, and request the appropriate involvement of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation and Public Art Committee.

B.8 Supporting the creation of a river of fountains as a celebration of the Grand River.

Kitchener has a number of gracious old fountains, and the spectacular new one at City Hall. Since the Grand River sweeps around the main part of the City, the pleasures of flowing water are not available in the urban centre. We could create a celebration of the Grand River--a river of fountains flowing from Cambridge to Kitchener to Waterloo and St. Jacobs along King Street: the equivalent of a man-made river. Again, this would be created over time by adding one fountain a year to those we already have. Designs, chosen annually through a competition, would be judged on artistic and technical merits. The fountains would flow with water in the summer, and in winter be transformed into natural gas lamps. Some would be tiny like a bird bath or drinking fountain or a tap on the wall; some grand like a waterfall. We think that small fountains would probably cost as much as redoing a bathroom in an ordinary house.

Action: We suggest that the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and Parks and Recreation assist in identifying citizen leadership and potential community partners, including partnership among the three cities; and that the departments of Parks and Recreation and Public Works incorporate this initiative into capital and operating budgets for scheduled projects where fountain might be an appropriate element.

Recommendation 12: that City Council investigate the feasibility of creating a river of fountains as a celebration of the Grand River, and request the appropriate involvement of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation, Public Works and the Public Art Committee.

Goal C:

Incorporate Arts and Culture Focus into Downtown Revitalization

Recently the City established a Downtown Action Team to address the revitalization of the downtown core. Three recommendations of the Mayor's Task Force on the Downtown made the link between downtown revitalization and the arts; namely, commissioning a feasibility study for a St. Jerome's Centre for the Arts, hiring a downtown events and festivals promoter, and consulting with downtown artists interested in establishing a live-work community in renovated downtown space. It also stressed the importance of having downtown become a destination for families, and suggested the creation of an arts zone. Participants in CulturePlan generated a specific version of an arts zone, called Kilometre of Culture, and offered other creative suggestions for bringing an arts and culture focus to the revitalization of downtown.

To incorporate an arts and culture focus into downtown revitalization, we propose:

C.9 Creating a "Kilometre of Culture" in the downtown core.

This would be an area of the core where existing and future arts facilities and attractions are integrated into a lively and vibrant downtown and linked with a marked walkway and various amenities such as fountains and murals. The Centre In The Square, Kitchener Public Library, Market Village, Water Street Theatre, City Hall and Civic Square, Victoria Park Pavilion, churches, Joseph Schneider Haus are some of the existing facilities; proposed facilities include the St. Jerome's Centre for the Arts, live/work studios, artist's retirement facilities, and retail and commercial outlets with an arts and culture focus. The Kilometre of Culture is not dependent on the City funding and operating it; rather, it will become a reality through the participation of a wide spectrum of funding opportunities in the private sector, public sector, and charitable and nonprofit sector.

Action: We see this initiative as a joint undertaking of the Downtown Action Team, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works, drawing on the original vision of the citizen proponents. Parks and Recreation would identify the arts and culture resources in the area specified; Public Works develop a program of signage and amenities as resources allow; and the Downtown Action Team insert and publish public materials (such as self-guided walks, events listings) that draw the attention of residents and visitors to the Kilometre of Culture.

Recommendation 13: that City Council approve the creation of a Kilometre of Culture as indicated on the accompanying map; incorporate it as appropriate into the Municipal Plan; and request appropriate involvement of Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development, Public Works and the Downtown Action Team.

C.10 Supporting the establishment of a Children's Museum in the downtown.

A children's museum is a place where exhibits and programs focus on innovative technologies and environmental issues and use arts as a vehicle to stimulate curiosity and creativity. It is a place where children and parents (and grandparents) can create together. Such a children's museum will bring families to downtown Kitchener and will complement existing cultural institutions. The City and the children's museum committee can co-operate in finding a location, seeking grants and donations, and in developing the partnerships with technologically-based organizations and businesses interested in promoting children's cultural development.

Action: We suggest that Parks and Recreation provide support to the various citizen committees for a Children's Museum, and that the Downtown Action Team participate with the committees in identifying potential buildings, preferably within the Kilometre of Culture. Part of the support provided to the committees by Parks and Recreation would be assistance in identifying sources of grants and donations, and identifying technologically-based organizations and businesses interested in promoting children's cultural development. Parks and Recreation should also assist the committees in preparing a proposal to City Council for a civic financial investment in the Children's Museum.

Recommendation 14: that City Council support the establishment of a children's museum, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation and the Downtown Action Team.

C.11 Creating "alley galleries" as part of laneway development in downtown.

Kitchener has a number of north-south lanes (eg, Goudie's, Hall's Lane, etc.) with buildings fronting onto them that have unused space in them. Transforming these alleys into back alley galleries will contribute to their attractiveness and liveability, and assist the goals of downtown revitalization. Interested artists, landlords, and tenants working together would use everyday materials and processes to create visually appealing pocket galleries, incorporating features such as sculptures, carvings, painting, and greenery irrigated by collected rainwater.

Action: The City's land use policies already provide for the fronting of buildings and shops onto laneways. We suggest that the Downtown Action Team invite interested artists, landowners and tenants to identify one or two initial sites, and to work together with Parks and Recreation and Planning and Development in incorporating back alley galleries into already-scheduled laneway development.

Recommendation 15: that City Council investigate the creation of back alley galleries as part of laneway development in downtown, and request appropriate involvement by the Downtown Action Team, Planning and Development and Parks and Recreation.

C.12 Enhancing the greening of downtown.

Through small scale and financially modest means such as use of portable trees, large and varied pots of colourful flowers, hanging gardens and selective plantings, create in the Civic Square, around the Forsyth Building and along King Street a more beautiful, restful, healthy and more comfortable place to be. Small floral beds might be planted by citizens as part of a Planting Festival in the spring. To close streets for special occasions, the potted trees might be moved to form natural barriers, and to provide shade and ambience to outdoor cafes, street exhibits or performances.

Action: We suggest that Parks and Recreation incorporate these suggestions into their annual operating plans, as appropriate, and to consult with artists and festival organizers for other greening ideas to augment specifically arts and festival activities. Participation of the Kitchener Horticultural Society might be invited also.

Recommendation 16: that City Council enhance the greening of downtown, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation, the Downtown Action Team, community partners and citizen proponents.

Goal D:

Augment Existing Cultural Facilities

Kitchener has an outstanding performance and exhibition facility in The Centre In The Square, and it is both recognized and well used by Kitchener and area residents. The area boasts many other specific and general use cultural facilities. A feasibility study is currently underway on creating a Centre for the Arts in the former St. Jerome's High School site, which would include restoration of an Edwardian theatre seating 285. Research for the St. Jerome's feasibility study, as well as for Waterloo and Cambridge municipal cultural plans, have shown that the market area could support another small performance facility, and that local arts and cultural organizations perceive a need for such a facility. Participants in the City of Kitchener sponsored needs survey and arts conference identified the need for a small performance venue. CulturePlan participants also identified the desirability for an outdoor performance venue; this suggestion was well received by members of the wider community during the public meetings.

To augment existing cultural facilities, we propose:

D.13 Supporting the creation of a performance venue of 300 - 450 seats

There are two facilities in Kitchener that, if refurbished, would fulfil the need for a small performance venue. The first facility is the former St. Jerome's High School site and was recommended for investigation by the Mayor's Task Force on the Downtown. A study is presently examining the feasibility of developing this historically significant site into the St. Jerome's Centre for the Arts which would include a restored 285 seat Edwardian theatre and a newly developed 400 seat flexible theatre space. The second facility is the Studio in The Centre In The Square. The Studio would provide an acoustically exceptional hall for chamber music and other multipurpose uses. Although the space is presently used by the Symphony for rehearsal space, it was originally conceived as a performance studio. If refurbished for this purpose, it might serve as a permanent home for the Canadian Chamber Ensemble as well as a venue for dance, drama, theatre, recordings and seminars.

Action: With respect to the St. Jerome's Centre for the Arts, we suggest that Council await the outcome of the St. Jerome's feasibility study, and if favourable, endorse the project in an effort to meet this objective. Alternately, or in conjunction with the St. Jerome's project, Council should invite the Board of The Centre In The Square to investigate the feasibility of refurbishing the Studio into its original intent as a performing studio space.

Recommendation 17: that Council support the creation of a performance venue of 300 - 450 seats, and request appropriate involvement by The Friends of St. Jerome's and the Board of The Centre In The Square.

D.14 Investigating the creation of an outdoor Amphitheatre.

An outdoor amphitheatre will be a venue for outdoor performances of all types. It will have a stage, a shell, and the provision for controlled (paid) admission. Such a facility would be located in a city-owned, park-like setting, such as Kiwanis Park or Chicopee, and will provide a venue for outdoor summer music, dance, drama and festival events.

In the public meetings, the idea of an amphitheatre generated considerable interest, and suggestions for at least a dozen different venues, including some in the downtown core or immediately adjacent.

Action: We suggest that Parks and Recreation be asked to consider an outdoor amphitheatre such as the one described above into subsequent revisions of the Leisure Facilities Strategy Master Plan, and to be alert to appropriate sites as changing circumstances create new opportunity (as happened recently when the Kiwanis Park became available to the City.)

Recommendation 18: that City Council investigate the creation of an outdoor amphitheatre as a venue for outdoor performances of all types, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation.

Goal E:

Support Increased Awareness and Communication

The arts community is not a homogeneous one; in fact, that which we prize most about the arts is the independent and unique views of the world that they offer us. One consequence is a sense of isolation and fragmentation in the arts community, and sometimes between the arts community and the general public. Arts service organizations and umbrella organizations such as the Waterloo Regional Arts Council have a very important role to play in facilitating communication among artists and with the community at large. CulturePlan participants felt that there were also some things that the City could do to ensure that its residents knew about and benefitted from the richness of arts and culture activity in the city.

To support increased awareness of the arts within the community, and increased communication within the arts sector, we propose:

E.15 Supporting a Hands-on-the-Arts Fair.

This would be a weekend event with art work centres for kids and parents. It would provide opportunities for people to try the various arts disciplines, and sign up for programs in the ones that interest them. It also provides opportunities for artists to showcase their work and for the community to become better acquainted with the artists as a primary creative resource for education, industry and community. With its emphasis on involving young people in the arts, and providing intergenerational arts experiences, the Hands-on-the-Arts Fair might interest school boards as potential community partners..

Action: We suggest that Parks and Recreation be asked to provide administrative support to the citizen proponents, and venues for a Hands-on-the Arts Fair.

Recommendation 19: that City Council support the creation of a Hands-on-the-Arts Fair, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation.

E.16 Supporting the development and implementation of an Appreciation Series

This is a series of free performances put on by artists of all kinds--the KW Symphony, the KW Art Gallery, drama groups, dance groups, etc. The purpose of the series is to provide people who might never have attended an arts performance an opportunity to do so, in the hope they become future audience members. By increasing the number of people willing to support artistic/cultural endeavours financially, the degree of dependence arts groups have on city grants would be reduced.

"Music in the Park" is an example of such a free event to increase exposure and develop future audiences.

Action: We suggest that Parks and Recreation be asked to provide administrative support to the proponents of this initiative in developing and implementing such a series.

Recommendation 20: that City Council support the development and implementation of an Appreciation Series, and request the appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation.

E.17 Expanding the City's Artist in Residence Program.

The current Artist in Residence Program is an illustration of how we see the various initiatives of CulturePlan coming to pass. Someone realized that the building used as a skate change room during the winter was available for six months of the year for another use, and that use might be as a studio for a resident artist. The second artist in residence is now ensconced in the Reflecting Studio, and like her predecessor, is offering workshops and seminars as well as producing and exhibiting her own work. The City provides full marketing support through Parks and Recreation. This year for the first time, a local corporation has provided an honorarium for the artist. Mutual Group made their donation when approached by a CulturePlan participant.

We would like to see the residency concept expanded as opportunities arise and resources become available. One dimension to the expansion would be to identify other spaces in City-owned buildings which could be made available as studio space for artists in residence. Another dimension for expansion would be to include artists of other disciplines: writers poets, performers, etc. A third dimension for expansion would be to extend the duration of the residency and eventually to provide housing, living expenses and materials in addition to space and marketing support. Artist in residence positions would be appropriately advertised and applicants juried on the quality of their work and their ability to interact with the community. When the program is well established, the City might consider arranging exchanges with artists in other cities in Canada and beyond.

Action: We suggest that Parks and Recreation be asked to identify potential spaces in other City-owned buildings where studios might be made available for artists in residence, and Parks and Recreation to work with other City departments in identifying opportunities and occasions for various forms of mini-residency programs. We suggest that the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation and the Public Art Committee be asked to identify potential community partners, and potential non-City sources of funding. When a corporate contribution is received for an artist honorarium, the City should match the amount.

Recommendation 21: that City Council approve in principle expansion of the City's artist in residence program, and request appropriate involvement by the Arts and Culture Advisory committee, Parks and Recreation and the Public Art Committee.

E.18 Supporting the creation of an information delivery system for arts and culture.

This computer-based system would serve the community at large and the arts community by providing access to regional cultural information. It would list events, classes, workshops, meetings, performances, exhibitions, etc. Also included would be directories of artists, grant and funding sources, facilities, and physical resources. The availability of such information would facilitate partnerships, increase participation in cultural activities, and maximize the use of available resources and facilities. Local and regional governments might join together with the Waterloo Regional Arts Council, the Kitchener Public Library, interested businesses, the universities and colleges, and local media, to build and maintain a continually-updated database.

Action: We don't see the City as the instigator of this initiative but rather as one player in a consortium. We suggest that Parks and Recreation be asked to provide support to the proponents of this initiative, and that Information Services be asked to contribute expertise to determining feasible approaches to delivering arts and culture information via a computer-based system.

Recommendation 22: that City Council approve in principle the City's participation in the creation of an information delivery system for arts and culture, and request appropriate involvement by Parks and Recreation and Information Systems.

E.19 Endorsing the continuation of periodic Salons or informal receptions focused on arts and culture.

These gatherings would help to promote public interest in the arts and continue the many fruitful interactions that began during the CulturePlan process. A performance or lecture at the beginning would focus the evening; the reception time following would enable conversation about current projects and concerns among artists and persons interested in the arts.

At the time of writing, three such gatherings have been held as an outcome of the CulturePlan process. Most recently, the Walper Best Western Hotel has offered to host an Arts and Letter Club each thursday evening at 8:30 in the second floor Barrister's Lounge. Seventy people were present at the inaugural gathering on June 6 for hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar, spontaneous entertainment and an atmosphere conducive to conversation.

Action: We do not see any direct role for the City in the organizing of Salons or informal receptions focused on arts and culture.

Recommendation 23: that City Council commend the organizers of the arts and culture Salons for the initiatives they have taken in this regard, and congratulate them on their success.

Goal F:

Monitoring Progress in Arts and Cultural Development

Just as the development of CulturePlan was a community-based, participatory process, we feel that the ongoing monitoring of our progress in arts and cultural development should be community-based and participatory. We see it as a role of a newly-mandated Arts and Culture Advisory Committee to design and give leadership to such a monitoring process.

To monitor progress in arts and cultural development, we propose:

F.20 Establishing an ongoing, community-based participation process to monitor progress toward the goals of CulturePlan

This monitoring process would include the following elements:

- a) The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee to review goals, initiatives, and actions each year in setting their own committee priorities; committee priorities should reflect these goals unless the goals have been superseded, in which case, they should be revised.
- b) The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and the Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division to review annually the progress made on goals, initiatives, and actions; and to publish an account of the progress for Council and the community.
- c) The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and the Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division to host an annual forum for purposes of reporting to the community on progress toward the CulturePlan goals, and inviting community input into reshaping the goals, initiatives and actions.
- d) The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and the Culture, Events, Leisure Programs Division, every fifth year, to formally review and revise CulturePlan, and to forward to Council their recommendations for goals, initiatives and actions for the subsequent five-year period.
- e) When the Municipal Plan, leisure facilities strategy master plan, and similar City planning documents are being revised, the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and the arts and culture community should be invited to contribute to the revisions as they pertain to arts and cultural development.

Action: We suggest that Council incorporate into the mandate of a permanent Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, the responsibility to develop and implement an ongoing, community-based, participatory process to monitor progress in arts and cultural development and to provide feedback to Council on progress toward goals.

Recommendation 24: That City Council approve the establishing of an ongoing, community-based, participatory process to monitor progress toward the goals of CulturePlan, and incorporate it into the mandate of a permanent Arts and Culture Advisory Committee.