

Arts & Culture Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a comprehensive framework to guide the planning, provision, and support of arts and culture based recreational programs in the Municipality of Middlesex Centre.

Policy Statement

Arts and culture are vital components of the Municipality of Middlesex Centre's identity and contribute significantly to the community's sense of place, civic pride, and overall well-being. By offering inclusive, accessible, and high-quality arts programming, the Municipality of Middlesex Centre will support the growth of the creative economy, stimulate tourism, and encourage lifelong learning. The Municipality of Middlesex Centre is committed to the continued development of arts and culture as a key element of a thriving, vibrant, and connected community. The Municipality also recognizes that public art and cultural assets contribute to community identity and acknowledges the need for clear processes around their ownership, maintenance and preservation once accepted as municipal assets.

Definitions

Arts: refers to the creative arts in all its forms of expression:

- Visual arts (painting, sculpture, printmaking, fine craft, photography, mixed media)
- Literary arts (fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry, playwriting)
- Performing arts (theatre, music, dance, opera, mime)
- Media arts (film, video, sound recording, cyber arts)
- Material arts (crafts, ceramics, textiles)
- Arts industries (production-line fine craft, publishing, graphic and surface design)

- Civic arts (architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, art in public places)
- Culturally specific arts (arts influenced by the values, customs, and traditions of peoples of historical or contemporary settlement)
- Community arts (recreational arts; variety or novelty arts)

Culture: refers to the values, customs, heritage, and traditions that characterize the community. Culture is inclusive and reflects the elements and traits of peoples of historical and contemporary settlement, popular culture, and the places, physical amenities, events, products, and creations that contribute to such values, customs, and traditions.

Program Offerings: Structured classes, workshops, and events designed to engage individuals in the creation and appreciation of art, theatre, music, or dance, facilitated by qualified instructors or experienced practitioners.

Responsibilities and Policy Review

This procedure is to be followed by Community Services staff under the supervision of the Director of Community Services. The policy will be reviewed every four years (once per council term).

Vision

To create a vibrant and inclusive arts and culture scene in Middlesex Centre that fosters creativity, supports local talent, and enhances the community's quality of life by providing opportunities for artistic expression in the areas of arts and culture.

Guiding Principles

1. Arts and Culture activity will be accessible to all, regardless of culture, language, religion, race, gender, age, ability, sexual orientation, or social standing.
2. Foster a participatory approach that involves residents in the development, delivery, and evaluation of arts programs, encouraging active participation and a sense of community.
3. Commit to delivering high-quality programs led by qualified artists, creatives, and cultural practitioners, including both professionals and experienced community members.

4. Work in collaboration with local arts organizations, schools, community groups, other groups, and other partners to maximize the impact of arts and cultural programs and resources.
5. Strive for long-term sustainability of arts and cultural services by ensuring funding, infrastructure, and resources are effectively managed and allocated.

Goals

Expand and Evaluate Program Offering

- Develop a variety of arts and culture-based classes for all skill levels.
- Offer kids, youth, adult, and senior programming.
- Regularly gather feedback from program participants, community members, and stakeholders to assess the impact and relevance of each program.
- Adapt programming based on feedback.

Foster Community Partnerships

- Collaborate with local arts organizations, galleries, theatres, music schools, and dance schools to enhance program offerings and provide professional guidance.
- Engage local businesses and tourism agencies to explore opportunities for cross-promotion, event hosting, and economic impact of arts programs.

Creating a Sustainable Funding Model

- Explore government grants, corporate sponsorships, and fundraising opportunities to ensure sustainability of arts and culture programs.

Optimize Infrastructure

- Invest in community spaces, such as galleries, performance venues, and studio spaces that are suitable for arts and culture programming.
- Ensure spaces are welcoming, inclusive, and accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

Promotion

- The Municipality will promote arts and culture to increase the number of residents attending arts and culture events and programs.

Associated Policies

The Arts and Culture policy compliments and supports the Municipality's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Policy by promoting cultural expression and representation through inclusive arts programming.

Conclusion

Through this policy, the Municipality of Middlesex reaffirms its commitment to fostering a rich, diverse, and sustainable arts and culture programming division that works to enhance the lives of residents, strengthens the community, and supports a creative local economy. By expanding and supporting arts, theatre, music and dance programs, the Municipality of Middlesex Centre will continue to build a vibrant community where creativity is celebrated and accessible to all.