



CULTURAL CAPITALE
CAPITAL CULTURELLE
of CANADA du CANADA

Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan

Prepared for

Cultural Capital of Canada Steering Committee

Prepared by:

EBERLE THOMPSON ASSOCIATES

In association with

MarketPULSE Strategic Direction Inc.

Millier Dickinson Blais Inc.

March 2008

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	4
Purpose of the Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan	4
Project Process	5
Economic Development Recommendations	6
Gap Analysis and Opportunities	7
Cultural Sector Impact	10
Best Practices in Comparator Communities	12
Cultural Development Plan Goals	14
Comox Valley Common Cultural Policy	15
Cultural Development Plan Specific Objectives	19
The Tools for Development	19
The Targets for Development	21
The Outcomes	23
Cultural Sectors - Action Plan	24
Festivals and Events	25
Music and Performing Arts	28
Visual and Fine Arts	30
Heritage, Museums, and Special Places	33
Multicultural and Communications	35
Culinary and Eco Experiences	37
Cultural Activists – Action Plan	39
The Creative Person	39
The Viable Cultural Organization	41
The Venture Culturalists	45
The Champion for Culture	49
The Empowered Citizen	54
Marketing the Cultural Economy	56
Conclusions	61
Recommendations	61
Appendix A Economic Impact Study	67
Appendix B Comox Valley Case Study	68
Appendix C Marketing the Cultural Economy	69

Appendix D Marketing Interview Questions	70
Appendix E Cultural Website Critique	72
Appendix F Comox Valley Cultural Map	73
Appendix G List of Participants	80

Executive Summary

The Comox Valley is home to a well-established, substantial, diverse and flourishing cultural community. From its earliest occupation, the 'Land of Plenty' has provided a comfortable life-style that nourishes participation in creative cultural activities.

Over the past several years, the Valley has experienced unprecedented population and economic growth attributed in part, to improved highway and air access and to the relocation of an older demographic to the Valley's mild climate and spectacular natural setting.

Purpose of the Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan

The Comox Valley acknowledges that culture has substantial economic and social impact for the region. The purpose of this project is to ensure that cultural capacity issues that may limit the region's ability to attract and retain investment, skilled labour and a creative economy are addressed through a range of strategies and actions.

The *Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan* is one of the legacies of the Cultural Capital of Canada 2007 award that strives to:

- Build capacity in the cultural sector,
- Identify a Common Cultural Policy,
- Coordinate cultural impact and resources and
- Create long-term cultural economic benefits.

The *Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan* is a practical guideline for collaboration among cultural organizations, municipal and regional governments, artists, and businesses to magnify the impact of cultural events, festivals, performances and experiences. Synergetic relationships between businesses and culture are identified so that economic benefits can be measured and felt by the whole community through increased cultural revenues and attendance as well as a growth in business investment.

Project Process

The *Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan* work involved interviews and meetings with approximately 50 individuals including:

- Meetings and consultation with members of the Cultural Capital Steering Committee comprising elected officials and senior management of the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and the K'ómoks First Nation.
- Meetings and interviews with practicing artists, cultural managers and producers, and board members of non-profit organizations.
- Meetings and interviews with education and training organizations.
- Meetings and interviews with cultural marketing professionals.
- Meetings and consultation with CVEDS staff.
- A cultural workshop held with members of the cultural sector to discuss sector skill capacity and needs and opportunities.
- A snapshot of the current cultural assets – a cultural map of resources, infrastructure, products and people – was assembled.
- The size and scope of the sector was determined from 2006 Statscan census data and from a review of locally available data on cultural activities and organizations, tangible and intangible cultural assets, noting their professional, educational and community nature.
- An economic analysis of the sector and current literature review describes the impact of cultural investment in economic and social terms.
- Case studies compared the Comox Valley with three similar communities, Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia, Kelowna, British Columbia and Collingwood, Ontario, to identify performance improvements in the context of “benchmarking” with the comparator communities. Annapolis Royal and Kelowna were designated Cultural Capitals in 2004 and 2005.
- The marketing assessment of the cultural sector identified current marketing deficiencies in the sector and the needs of the sector in order to grow through investment, increased product development using specific marketing initiatives.

Economic Development Recommendations

From an economic development perspective, the Comox Valley is in an enviable position for the development of cultural industries, and for maximizing the economic impact of cultural industries in a manner that brings broad benefits to the community. The economic development strategy is thus – in part – a matter of “stay the course.” However, as much of the current success appears to have its origins in happenstance, community volunteerism and cultural enterprise, rather than in a specifically-articulated economic development strategy, it is advisable for the community to consider the economic development impact associated with activity in the cultural sector.

To this end, Comox Valley should articulate an explicit economic development agenda for the cultural sector as part of cultural development strategy; this direction acknowledges that the cultural sector has value, activity and impacts beyond the economic sphere, but also recognizes that maximizing the economic value and impact of the cultural sector works in the community’s broad interests. Recognizing that creativity can not be planned and that the heart and soul of culture is the catalyst that stimulates the economic engine it is possible to invest in ways that support rather than dictate the cultural direction. This model sees economic development in the cultural sector embracing five central goals:

- **Create Jobs**, with a particular emphasis on supporting artists and small cultural organizations as if they were businesses or micro-enterprises.
- **Stimulate Trade through Cultural Tourism**, recognizing the community’s existing strengths in this regard, and positioning cultural tourism as a tool for attracting additional resources to the local cultural sector
- **Attract Investment by Creating Live/Work Zones for Artists**, recognizing such live/work spaces as anchors around which to build successful neighbourhood economies
- **Diversify the Local Economy**, specifically by clustering local arts organizations as retail anchors and activity generators to attract and support other businesses and enterprises
- **Improve Property and Enhance Value**, by leveraging the proximity of cultural amenities and individual artist’s efforts to improve property aesthetics and increase property value.¹

¹ Millier, Dickinson Blais, Comox Valley Economic Impact of Cultural Industries, 2008 p 52

Gap Analysis and Opportunities

In order to determine the strength and diversity of the cultural sector in the Comox Valley, Location Quotients (“LQ’s”) have been calculated to identify and measure the concentration of industry/business activity by major sector and sub-sector. They assess the concentration of economic activities within a smaller area relative to the overarching region in which it resides, or relative to a set of comparator communities. For the purposes of this study, Location Quotients were calculated that compare the Comox Valley culture sector concentration relative to the Province of British Columbia.

- As a method of comparing and contrasting these results, we have also compared the LQ’s of three communities in Canada that are recognizable for their cultural sectors: the Town of Collingwood in Ontario, the City of Kelowna in British Columbia, and Annapolis County Nova Scotia (Annapolis Data forthcoming).
- Comox Valley and Kelowna both have LQ’s greater than 1.0 for Newspaper, Periodical, Book and Database Publishers but are under-represented in the three Software Publishing, Motion Picture and Video industries, and Sound Recording industries.
- In a range of design-oriented occupations including interior designers, industrial designers and graphic designers, the Comox Valley is greatly underrepresented with a LQ below 0.5.
- Of particular note is the strength of the LQ for Independent Artists, Writers and Performers in Comox Valley. The LQ of 1.464 is much higher than the comparator communities, and could be identified as an area of local competitive advantage when attempting to attract future business in this sector.

Fit with the Creative Industries Sector

The creative sector encompasses all aspects of the non-profit and for profit arts, culture, entertainment and creative industries. ‘Creative industries’ often exist in close proximity to strong cultural hubs as they both have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent. Attracting, training and retaining this labour force has the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property. Creative industries include architecture, art and crafts, designer fashions, interactive leisure software, music, performing arts, publishing, software, and film. Typically, these industries are environmentally

low-impact and increasingly 'green' in their operational methods and materials.

- Information and cultural industries are underrepresented in the Comox Valley when compared to the provincial sector and is the lowest of when compared with Collingwood Ontario and Kelowna BC in the community comparison analysis. North Island College and its relatively recent partnership with Emily Carr College of Art and Design in Vancouver is now graduating more than 20 students annually. Most graduates move away from the Valley to seek employment. They have a skill set that is desirable in the massively successful electronic gaming industry. The Comox Valley provides an excellent location to attract electronic arts and animation industries. The skill set is already here, the industry is environmentally friendly and the economic impact from wage generation would be considerable. Artists would use their creative talents and be able to thrive in the Valley.
- Industrial design and specialized design services are also underrepresented, at less than half of that of Kelowna and well below the provincial rate. North Island College is seeking to expand the Design Program to Web Design and Video Gaming and an Industrial Design option is being considered. Graduates in these fields could potentially support expansion of these under-represented industries.
- Attraction of Industrial design, interior design and architectural industries would link the existing skills to the new demand created by the growing population. The Comox Valley has international award winning screen print expertise and technology. The Fine Arts program at North Island College is graduating students each year who have screen print training but who must leave the valley to find employment.
- A new creative sector business originating from K'ómoks First Nations cultural and spiritual traditions of healing is seeking investment partners. Founded on the traditional knowledge and intellectual property of the First Nations' people, the company has identified skin care, herbal and medicinal nutraceutical preparations as an opportunity in a well-established and fast growing market.
- Simon James of the Kwakwaka'wakw Nation on the North Island has used his artistic and computer animation skills to co-produce 13 episodes of Raven Tales, native stories passed down through generations. These are sold through native galleries, and on their website and can be seen on Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. James and his partner Chris

Kientz are creating a Nintendo Wii video game and have plans to develop a clothing and book line.

- Original native motifs designed by First Nations artist Andy Everson (K'ómoks – Kwakwaka'wakw) are the essential ingredient in a new line of original custom furniture and art. In collaboration with designer Sabina Hill, handcrafted from local and imported solid woods are combined with precision cut metal and glass, to create authenticated limited edition and commission pieces of museum quality that evoke the natural beauty of the northwest coast.
- There are three small recording studios in the Valley and locally produced and recorded CDs are becoming more available. With easy air access to the Valley, this is a great location for musicians to
- The labour strength in the Comox Valley is in independent arts, writers and performers. Stats Can data on the size of this sector appears to be underestimated when compared with informal tallies of the number of professional and working artists in the region. Art and craft production, fiber and fine wood products far exceed the capacity of the local population to support these industries.
- Agencies to find new distribution markets would assist local artists, generate income and export the high quality Comox Valley products across the country. The Valley is already an exporter of these products but lack of capacity to market outside the region is a factor of the size and ability of individual producer/artists. The valley also has a shortage of local commercial galleries, sales outlets and other exhibition spaces so competition for display space is high.

For creative sector industries, the Comox Valley has the advantages of a quality of life, artistic stimulation and skill set, market access and reasonable cost of living that are attractive to investors.

Cultural Sector Impact

The cultural sector has historically been identified as particularly difficult to analyze because of the many non-quantitative factors that apply such as: applying an economic value to volunteering in the community, the intrinsic value earned from participating in culture, and attempting to determine the number of participants to non-gated venues. As a result, the economic impact calculations that follow do not capture all impacts of cultural activity, but do represent a credible estimate of economic (i.e. financial) impacts of the sector.

- For the purposes of the economic impact calculation that follows, employment in the cultural sector in Comox Valley range from 858 full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) to 917 FTEs. The lower limit of the estimate was used to measure direct impact. The approximate total spending in the cultural sector in the Comox Valley is in the vicinity of \$45 million per year:

Employment Expenditures	\$32,123,764
Other Expenditures	<u>\$12,849,505</u>
Total Cultural Sector Expenditures	\$44,973,269

- When economic multipliers are applied to measure the effect of spending within an economy any expenditure results in two additional kinds of economic impact:
- Indirect impact effects occur when those businesses who supply the cultural sector end up increasing their purchases of materials and services from other businesses, in order to meet the cultural sector's demands. This creates positive spin-off activity that generates revenues for "second and third round effect" businesses that are not directly involved in cultural expenditures.
- Induced impacts are created when those who benefit from increases in either direct or indirect expenditures proceed to spend a portion of their increased wealth within the local economy, in order to meet their household needs.
- Utilizing conservative and established approaches to economic impact calculation, it is possible to make the case that the total economic impact of the cultural sector in the Comox Valley exceeds **\$75 million per year**.
- Many festivals and events feature the sale of cultural products. The Filberg Festival in 2007 generated direct and indirect economic impact of \$1.22 million from wages and expenditures by the society and in addition, sale of crafts by vendors during the festival exceeded \$1.25 million having economic impact of \$3.79 million.

- The cultural sector contributes about \$1,222 per person to the local economy.
- More than 3.5% of the local population is employed in the (broadly-defined) cultural sector, a percentage much higher than in comparator communities and more than double the national average.
- 2001 Statistics Canada data indicates that there were 805 people employed in this sector.
- FP Markets data suggests that the sector had grown to 917 people in 2007, a growth rate of 6.6%.
- Local analysis suggests that these numbers may be low and a detailed benchmark survey is recommended to establish a more accurate measure of sector size.
- Furthermore, tourism – and cultural tourism in particular – are strong contributors to the local economy, with related impacts on cultural sector activity. Although there are no figures of tourist visit to the Comox Valley, some estimates range as high as 450,000 per year. Local surveys of tourist motivation suggest as many as 79% of Comox Valley tourists indicate that they participate in cultural activities during their visit. Even if one assumes cultural activities (such as festivals) as the principle driver for only 1/5 of area tourists, the impacts are still significant:

90,000 cultural tourists	
x 5-day average stay	
x \$68.88 average daily spending	
	\$30,996,000 annual cultural tourism spending
- The high overall impact of the sector underlines the need for the Comox Valley’s cultural sector strategy to incorporate elements of a cultural tourism strategy.

Best Practices in Comparator Communities

The growing awareness of the economic importance of the cultural industry has led communities to view investment in this industry as a vital strategy for economic and community revitalization. By investment, communities' desire additional jobs, a strong tax base, growth of cultural enterprises, attraction and retention of talented people/businesses, and the promotion of community identity and diversity.

Many cities have produced culture and strategic plans with mandates that encompass the following key principles:

- Culture plays an essential role in building and sustaining a diverse urban community that is socially and economically healthy;
- Cultural programs will promote inclusivity and celebrate cultural diversity;
- Residents and visitors should have affordable and convenient opportunities to participate in the cultural life of the city;
- Municipal government will play a leadership role to ensure that the city has a vibrant, active and strong cultural life.

(City of Toronto, *Culture Plan: for the Creative City*, 2003)

Culture is becoming a top priority for communities. Studies to determine good examples of cultural plans have identified various cultural planning mechanisms with the successful cases possessed these critical factors:

- Customized local solution
- Champions at senior staff and council levels
- Commitment of resources
- Buy-in from local cultural community
- Access to information from other municipalities
- Time to utilize multiple techniques for broad citizen engagement.

Three communities were selected for comparison with the Comox Valley based on their size, similarities and success. The top ranking critical success factors that that the communities shared are:

- Develop an adequately resourced culture office
- Support collaboration
- Recognize and reward volunteerism
- Ensure the authenticity of the cultural experience
- Make natural beauty an extension of cultural brand
- Build cultural tourism strategies and Four-Season resort packages
- Understand the economic impacts of the sector and undertake detailed benchmark studies.

Cultural Development Plan Goals

The *Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan* is a practical guideline for collaboration among cultural organizations, municipal and regional governments, artists, and businesses to magnify the impact of cultural events, festivals, performances and experiences.

The *Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan* will provide a blueprint for the Comox Valley to:

- Identify and articulate a strategic cultural vision for the region,
- Guide and integrate cultural planning,
- Provide an investment framework in the sector
- Guide the Comox Valley Regional District, City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and the K'ómoks Band in planning development in the areas of role definition, cultural investment, and culture and heritage facilities and programming.
- Improve information exchange and understanding of arts and cultural opportunities region-wide.
- Enable coordinated planning and development of region-serving cultural programs and facilities.
- Capture key issues and opportunities in arts and cultural development that are best addressed cooperatively at the regional level, and that would complement or enhance initiatives of local governments and cultural organizations.
- Better define and understand the scope, role and impact of arts and cultural industries within the Comox Valley economy.
- Develop actions and strategies to enhance positive economic impacts.

Comox Valley Common Cultural Policy

Through the Cultural Capital of Canada award, the five jurisdictional areas of the Comox Valley, The City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland, Comox Valley Regional District and the K'ómoks First Nation have successfully demonstrated an ability to collaborate on and deliver a diverse range of cultural experiences. Building on these foundations, a Comox Valley Cultural Policy integrates the spirit of the distinctive municipal policies and cultural practices into a broad framework that will enable continued focused collaborative ventures. The following policy is presented as a complimentary policy to those currently existing.

Vision

The Comox Valley Common Cultural Policy is built on the fundamental principle that culture is vital to the individual, social and economic well being of the Valley and that the municipal, and regional governments of the Comox Valley are committed to supporting culture.

Mission

An important priority for the municipal, and regional governments of the Comox Valley is ensuring that present and future generations of citizens benefit from a healthy and inspiring cultural environment that builds on our valley's unique heritage and evokes feelings of pride and achievement and contributes to a better quality of life.

It is in this spirit that the municipal and regional governments adopt the following mission:

Ensure that citizens of the Comox Valley have the opportunity to share, express and experience culture in a region that respects the past, celebrates the present and welcomes the future.

Citizens have expressed a desire for a broad definition of culture, founded on a number of key principles, that will inform the policy and guide the Comox Valley in setting goals and developing cultural strategies, initiatives and programs.

Key Principles

The Comox Valley's Cultural Policy is comprised of the following key elements:

Quality of Life

Quality of life is measured not only by economic prosperity, but by the benefits incurred from participation in cultural activities: a sense of identity and belonging, of confidence, of community and of shared heritage. It is the sum of the physical, mental, social and spiritual components that make up our humanity. It is what will make the Comox Valley an even more attractive place to live.

Partnership and Collaboration

The successful development of a thriving cultural community requires a healthy social capital marked by active volunteerism and a strong non-profit sector, solid partnerships and a sharing of responsibility among the governments of the Comox Valley, the private sector, cultural organizations and other agencies and citizens.

Diversity

By celebrating the diversity of our cultural heritage and creative expression, building on the values and experiences we share, and welcoming newcomers to the Valley, we will be able to know each other better and to make the Comox Valley an even more attractive place to live, where all citizens can feel a sense of pride and belonging.

A Valued Cultural and Creative Community

Culture is vital to the individual, social and economic prosperity of the Valley and the municipal and regional governments are committed to continuing to support and promote cultural growth.

Stewardship and Sustainability

Governments and citizens share the important responsibility of safeguarding and enhancing culture for future generations. The restoration, preservation and protection of the tangible objects and intangible elements of our culture and identity are paramount to the sustainability of a strong and vibrant cultural heritage. The municipal and regional governments also recognize and encourages the important role played by volunteers and non-profit organizations in governing, managing and supporting our cultural resources and continue to support cultural facilities and foundations.

Economic Development

Culture contributes to a diversified economy through the financial impacts associated with both resident and visitor experiences. Direct economic benefits include employment, tax revenues, local spending, and income from tourism. Consequently, the Comox Valley will benefit from a supportive environment for the growth of the Valley's cultural sector.

Access

Citizens of the Comox Valley must have the opportunity to join in the full range of cultural experiences in the region. Since the Cultural Policy encourages a wide range of cultural and creative expression, residents in the Comox Valley will contribute to and benefit from cultural activities not matter where they live. Beyond ensuring that location is not a limiting factor, there needs to be a focus on removing barriers that prevent some citizens from participating fully in the cultural life of the Valley. Improving access particularly for disadvantaged citizens will help to improve the quality of life throughout the Comox Valley.

Goals of the Common Cultural Policy

The municipal and regional governments will demonstrate their commitment through actions and partnerships designed to strengthen the resilience of the cultural community and to ensure that the cultural legacy of the Comox Valley is protected, preserved and enhanced for future generations. This will be achieved by successfully attaining four basic goals:

1. Access to a wide range of cultural experiences and opportunities

- Ensure stable and predictable funding for cultural facilities and foundations
- Use new technology to strengthen our ability to share and experience culture
- Increase public awareness of the natural heritage and history through innovative education, interpretative and outreach programming.
- Provide support for the conservation of historic places for heritage education.
- Provide support for arts festivals, post-secondary artist-in-residence programs, community presenters, Aboriginal art camps, traveling exhibitions, public galleries and the acquisition of public art.

2. Enhance community capacity to support and promote cultural activity

- Encourage greater charitable giving to non-profit organizations
- Explore opportunities to collaborate among all levels of government, the private sector, non-profit organizations, cultural and educational institutions and individuals for the support of culture.
- Reinforce the critical role of volunteers in the community

- Promote awareness of the beneficial role of culture in health, wellness, education, human rights, youth development, tourism and community.
- Facilitate First Nations and other distinct communities in expressing and sharing their cultures and perspectives.

3. Encourage excellence in the work of artistic and cultural professional and organizations

- Provide support for individual artists, community support organizations and projects
- Provide support for the major regional cultural organizations
- Promote and support opportunities to provide Comox Valley artists, cultural performers and heritage professionals with provincial, federal and international exposure.
- Review existing cultural and recreational programs with a view to ensuring continued relevance and effectiveness.

4. Foster growth, sustainability and investment in the Comox Valley's cultural industries



- Explore and identify alternative funding models to enhance the sustainability and growth of the Valley's creative industries
- Explore and consider options for a cultural industries development program to enhance support for sound recording, book and magazine publishing and new media
- Improve collaboration with cultural industry
- stakeholders to align government and industry efforts to increase industry capacity, sustainability and development
- Continue to market and promote the Comox Valley's cultural industries.

Cultural Development Plan Specific Objectives

The *Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan* presented in this report responds to the challenge of coordinating five jurisdictions, six major cultural areas of activity, more than 75 not-for-profit organizations, hundreds of creative individuals and thousands of committed participating volunteers and audience members.

The Tools for Development

The language of economic development and the language of cultural development may not use the same words but they share common purposes.

Economic Development	Cultural Development	Meaning
Investment Attraction =	Advocacy	Promotion of the awareness of value
Business Facilitation =	Education/Training	Enhancing the capabilities to succeed
Business Expansion =	Investment	Securing the resources to grow
		
		
Economic Diversity Prosperity		Culturally Vibrant Quality of Life

Cultural organizations, by their nature, speak to values held by a society and these values are difficult to measure with the same yardstick as business. However, just as business is adopting socially responsibility as a goal, culture is measuring economic impact.

The Tools for Development

Advocacy

- **Value** - Demonstrate the value of the sector through its economic impact.
- **Awareness** - Represent the size and diversity of the sector through cultural mapping.

Education

- **Skills for management** - Assist the sector to function more effectively through access to management skills – e.g. grant writing, board development, performance measurement.
- **Marketing** - Increase public awareness, identity, access and partnerships through marketing.
- **Training** - Assist visual and performing artists to excel at their craft and to have the opportunity to earn a living.

Investment

- **Time** - Investment of **time** in planning for future needs, programs, priorities; in collaboration and partnerships; time to dream.
- **Knowledge** - Investment in **knowledge** of public needs and priorities through surveys and data collection; in research innovation, creation and design to build intellectual property.
- **Facilities** - Capital investment in rejuvenation of old facilities, creation of new **facilities**, transformation of use of some facilities to cultural priorities and development of signage and visitor services sites.

The Targets for Development

The Cultural Development Plan is targeted at six broad groupings of cultural activity – the cultural products, and at the specific individuals and organizations – the cultural producers, that must initiate the actions.

The Cultural Products

Several larger areas of cultural endeavour are easily grouped for marketing and tourism. Although the general area of activity may be similar, remember that operationally they range from professional to student; annual to one-time; and from private enterprise to not-for profit to government sponsored. They are:

- **Festivals and Events** – More than 50 festival and events from one day to one week are held annually.
- **Music and Performing Arts** – At least 17 non-profit societies, more than 50 professional musicians, plus actors, dancers, vocal groups and talented amateur (not earning a living) musicians. Approximately 15 performance venues including parks, pubs and theatres.
- **Visual and Fine Arts** – 23 galleries, profit and not for profit groups representing more than 1,000 painters, sculptors, fiber, ceramic, wood, graphic and media artists
- **Heritage, Museums and Places** – 4 museums, hundreds of historic and cultural locations, 10,000 years of heritage
- **Multicultural and Communications** – 30 organizations representing web and software developers, writers and poets, plus three libraries, literacy groups and at least 4 multicultural associations.
- **Culinary and Eco Experiences** – Specialty foods and beverages, natural history, horticultural societies and eco tour groups add more than 25 organizations.

The Cultural Producers

At the heart of the specific objectives is the desire to nurture and expand the quality of life afforded by a dynamic cultural network. Specific objectives focus on the individual, the organization, and the funding agency as agents of change. The outcomes or desired results will be sustainability, improved infrastructure, economic impact, capacity building, partnerships and community pride.

- **The Creative Person** - The individual creative person is the force that makes this possible.
- **The Viable Cultural Organization** - The outlet for this creative expression is frequently through cultural organizations, associations and groups that plan and present events.
- **The Venture Culturalists** - Municipal and regional governments are the usual owners of the capital asset – the theatre, park, gallery – for which they commit public funds. Private business and producers are also investors in culture.
- **The Champion of Culture** - An arms-length Cultural Advocacy Agency acts in the best interest of the cultural sector to ensure that it is functioning at its highest level with an integrated strategy for capital investment, capacity building and peer review. Regional cultural policy resides here and is served by the specific policies appropriate to each municipality, the region and the K'ómoks First Nation. This agency represents the professional dedication, legitimate needs and economic value of cultural community.
- **The Empowered Citizen** - The citizens are cultural participants, not merely spectators, in a healthy sustainable cultural sector.

The Outcomes

Using the tools of Advocacy, Education and Investment to target the producers of culture – the Individuals and Organizations – the cultural activities of the Comox Valley can be enhanced and strengthened to produce the following outcomes:

- **Collaboration and Partnership** – The Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan is founded on increased collaboration and partnership between and among organizations, individuals, local governments and business.
- **Sustainability** – Sufficient resources and skills must be available to maintain the sector’s health.
- **Infrastructure** – Cultural capital for performance, presentation, education, and inspiration must be planned in advance and incorporated into regional strategies.
- **Economic Impact** – A vibrant culture has economic impact through its employment, products, tourism and capacity to attract creative people and industries.
- **Community Pride** – A community, proud of its cultural treasures, supports cultural activity through volunteerism, participation, cash and in-kind donations, advocacy and promotion.



Advocacy

Education/Training

Investment

Producers:

Creative Persons

Viable Cultural Structures

Venture Culturalists

Champion of Culture

Empowered Citizens

Products:

Festivals and Events

Music and Performing Arts

Visual & Fine Arts

Heritage, Museums & Places

Multicultural & Communications

Culinary & Eco Experiences

Collaboration & Partnership

Sustainability

Community Pride

Infrastructure

Economic Impact

Cultural Sectors - Action Plan

The following framework identifies the products and producers that must work together to close the capacity gaps to achieve the desired outcomes.

Reading across the chart - each festival needs creative people working in partnership, from the board to the performers, to make it sustainable. The festival society must organize its affairs and relationships to meet sustainable mandates. Sponsors, funders and businesses expect to see significant economic impact from investments in infrastructure and operations which festivals to maintain a sustainable operation. All organizations benefit from a champion who can help to lever funding, facilitate partnerships and contribute to sustainable practices. Finally the citizen, taxpayer, donor, visitor wants a quality experience to share with family and out-of-town guests. The model is the same for each cultural cluster but the specific actions are unique to each.

	The Creative Person	The Viable Cultural Organization	The Venture Culturalists	The Champion of Culture	The Empowered Citizen
Festivals and Events	Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Collaboration & Partnership Sustainability	Economic Impact Infrastructure	Infrastructure Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Community Pride
Music and Performing Arts	Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Collaboration & Partnership Sustainability	Economic Impact Infrastructure	Infrastructure Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Community Pride
Visual and Fine Arts	Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Collaboration & Partnership Sustainability	Economic Impact Infrastructure	Infrastructure Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Community Pride
Heritage, Museums and Places	Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Collaboration & Partnership Sustainability	Economic Impact Infrastructure	Infrastructure Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Community Pride
Multicultural and Communications	Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Collaboration & Partnership Sustainability	Economic Impact Infrastructure	Infrastructure Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Community Pride
Culinary and Eco Experiences	Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Collaboration & Partnership Sustainability	Economic Impact Infrastructure	Infrastructure Sustainability Collaboration & Partnership	Community Pride
Outcomes	Collaboration & Partnership	Sustainability	Community Pride	Infrastructure	Economic Impact

Festivals and Events

The Comox Valley is host to more than 50 festivals and events annually. Attendance at the festivals is high, accounting for an estimated 125,000 visitors annually.

- Volunteerism in this sector is very high. Most festivals feature the sale of cultural products; paintings, ceramics, fiber and wood products, glass and metal sculptures, specialty local foods and music recordings. These economic activities associated with festivals do not necessarily confer revenue upon the festival organization but on the hundreds of small cultural businesses that are significant elements of the celebration.
- Multi-day festivals attract more than 58% of visitors from outside the Comox Valley and 60% of those visitors stay more than 2 nights contributing economic benefits to a host of other businesses.

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action Improve infrastructure for events and festivals</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with users of parks to determine needs for events including toilets, pavilions, transportation, tents and health concerns. • Assess health, electrical, water, garbage and recycling demands • Incorporate improvements into capital plans for parks • Identify partnerships and funding sources and opportunities for sponsorships of capital accessories <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better equipped parks for festivals • Less cost to organizers, better compliance with health and electrical inspectors • More opportunities to host events in parks 	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Investment</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Investment</p>
<p>Action Promote the festivals through tourism marketing</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Package the festival experience with other activities such as sport and culinary events • Create a joint festivals' promotional plan to expand tourism and local awareness of festivals 	<p>Education</p> <p>Investment</p>

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate a festival committee to develop a winter festival to premier in 2010 <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased attendance at festivals • Increased awareness of the Comox Valley of Festivals 	<p>Advocacy</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Improve communication and collaboration among festival producers</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host facilitated sessions of festival organizers so that they can recognize their common needs and natural advantages • Attract 'name' speakers of significant international festivals to address the producers of local events and improve the product • Provide resource materials for event planning and access to advisors for events <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better run festivals with capacity for succession • Sharing of resources, marketing, packaging and complimentary scheduling. 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education Investment</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Improve sustainability of events and festivals</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop entrepreneurial skills of festival producers so that they are equipped to develop and sell products at the festivals to increase revenues • Establish an off-season joint gift shop at a visitor centre so that branded festival products can be purchased with revenues going to events and festivals. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branded festival products available year round • Increased attendance at festivals • Increased awareness of the Comox Valley of Festivals 	<p>Education</p> <p>Investment</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Determine the economic impact of the festivals for the Comox Valley and seek ways to support their success.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare an analysis of all festivals with respect to a range of measurable characteristics including attendance, revenues, artisans and crafts persons participating, characteristics of market 	<p>Education</p>

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross reference festivals with hotels and restaurant business spikes to measure impact <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved capacity of festivals to secure sponsorship by demonstrating economic impact and reach. • Improved understanding by public and politicians of economic value of festivals 	<p>Education</p>

Music and Performing Arts

The City of Courtenay has built and substantially funds key facilities, including the Sid Williams Theatre that serve the entire region. There is a range of companies providing entertainment and engagement that span professional to student. Many of these companies act as incubators for young talent and supply the valley with good quality, diverse, confidence and skill-building opportunities.

- The Sid Williams Theatre is a 500 seat theatre operating at full booking capacity. Although community utilization of the theatre is maximized, the seating capacity is often more than required for a small community group or insufficient to meet the public demand for seats and costs of hosting more expensive and touring productions.
- Participation in these areas is credited to the strong arts education program maintained by School District 71 and the excellence and international reputation of the Comox Youth Music Camp.
- There is a shortage of both smaller (200 seat) venues and larger (1200 seat) venues. Other than the outdoor stage at Vancouver Island Music Fest, there is no venue for large concerts.

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action</p> <p>Better utilize the seating capacity and revenue potential of the Sid Williams Theatre while increasing the number of theatre seats available for smaller music, theatre and dance presentations.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with private investors to restore the Ilo Ilo in Cumberland and Palace in Courtenay as public performance spaces • Explore the possibility of installing stadium seating in the Sport Centre to provide larger concert seating. • Identify outdoor summer locations for tented theatre locations • Improve technical and seating capacities of small theatre companies so that they can host smaller performances currently in the Sid Williams • Explore the development of a cultural and performance 	<p>Investment</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Investment</p> <p>Investment</p> <p>Advocacy</p> <p>Advocacy</p>

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>space in Comox</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate a valley-wide discussion with municipal and regional governments and significant regional developers to formulate a plan for a conference and performing arts centre. • Develop a strategy for 2010 Olympics that will permit the advancement of performance facilities and accommodation. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased seating capacity for many smaller and some larger events • More access to outside performances and productions hosted at the Sid Williams Theatre • Improved ability of presenters to cover costs • Improved capacity for professional companies to succeed 	<p>Education Investment</p> <p>Education</p>

Visual and Fine Arts

The Comox Valley is home to at least 1,000 visual artists. They work primarily in paint, clay, glass, fiber, wood, metal, and stone. The Comox Valley Centre for the Arts is a regional support centre funded by the City of Courtenay.

- The artist is one of the lowest paid workers in the labour force. In the Comox Valley, less than 10% are able to make a living from their work. Their creative output is often sought (by donation) for fundraising events, used to promote lifestyles, and presented as free entertainment in galleries.
- Their combined production exceeds the capacity of the local market to purchase it. Access to external markets is generally limited. Gallery access is infrequent; there are four small galleries available to local artists including one artist run co-op, and weekend exhibition opportunities at venues such as the Filberg Lodge. Festivals such as *Art in Bloom* and the *Filberg Festival* provide another short-term outlet for display and sales.
- Artists are small businesses that must find other sources of income to survive.
- ‘Life long learning’ is the mantra of the early-retirement adult. This demographic is filling art classes and joining groups and clubs for creative inspiration and social interaction.

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action Expand the capacity of the Comox Valley Centre for the Arts to serve the needs of the visual and fine arts community.</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the other municipalities to identify needs and funding that will support the outreach activities of the Comox Valley Arts Centre • Document current use to demonstrate regional importance and reach. • Identify regional visual and fine arts collaborations to build community capacity <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaboration among municipalities and artists • Greater appreciation of the regional reach and impact of the Centre 	
<p>Action Improve the capacity of the sector to produce works of art, sell product, and generate revenue.</p>	

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with North Island College to design a customized professional development program for young artists. • Create overall promotional materials, guides and maps to artists’ studios, galleries, and co-ops • Promote ‘Artist in our Midst’ tours • Provide access to business and marketing skills for the small business that is the artist • Develop a business and arts forum for the Comox Alley with invited speakers from both sectors to stimulate communications and opportunities • Expose emerging artists to the experiences and advice of successful creators and entrepreneurs • Provide a mechanism for artists to expose their works to a larger market <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased sales of works of art • More successful Canada Council grant applications, increased number of exhibitions • Increased number of artists working full time • Wealth creation through improved employment . • Tourism increased for extended stay classes in music, art, writing. • Growth in business opportunities that supply, promote culture. • More graduating fine arts students have professional skills • Visitor access to a wide range of works of art through galleries, gift shops and studios. • Increased name recognition • Increased interest in artistic pursuits by public • Web-site featuring Comox Valley artists, examples of work and opportunity to purchase on line or contact the artist. 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Advocacy Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action Provide a publicly accessible school for cultural endeavour. A place where visual and performing artists can meet, learn, teach, work, collaborate, communicate, innovate, inspire.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In partnership with SD71 secure a closing school and turn it into affordable rental studio spaces, classes rooms for master classes, summer school for tourists from Europe 	<p>Investment</p>

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Performance Measure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New cultural tourism attraction with longer period stay (the new Provence) • Demonstration of cultural impact on hotel and restaurants so that hotel tax can be charged and directed to culture. • Booking use and rental revenue increase over time • Demand for art school increases so much, another school is required for dance, music, cooking, writing and media. • CV is known for its School(s) of Culture 	

Heritage, Museums, and Special Places

Human habitation of the Comox Valley can be traced back thousands of years. A moderate climate, fertile land and an abundance of foods, materials for shelter, and spiritual expression supported a large First Nations population. The waterways along the coast and across the island facilitated trade routes.

- The Comox Valley has four museums, its own dinosaur, a 10,000-year-old glacier, and was once home to mammoths and mastodons.
- In a cold and windy June, 1579, Francis Drake and the *Hinde* are contended to have stayed in Comox harbour – perhaps this is Drake’s *Nova Albion*.
- Although settlement of the region by non-aboriginals is relatively recent - first settlers arrived in 1862 - the area is rich in a resource-based history of mining, logging, farming and fishing.
- The history of the Comox Valley is apparent in the street names.
- Museums are the keepers and interpreters of the community’s treasures and history and are uniquely able to reflect the community and engage the public in discussions about the past, present and future.

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action</p> <p>Utilize the resources of the Courtenay and District Museum to identify and interpret local histories.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In collaboration with Comox Valley Tourism, fund guides and brochures that interpret regional industrial, social and natural history. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurable utilization of information and guides and websites • Increased recognition and reliance on the professional museological services of the Courtenay and District Museum. • More complete regional historical information 	

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action Increase heritage knowledge and access for tourists and the community.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add downloadable walking tour maps to the tourism website for each community • Prepare the Comox Valley podcasts for download and personal tour of districts, sites, architecture, museums in English, French and Cantonese • Identify special places and landscapes of cultural, social, and historical importance and tell the stories. Glacier, weirs, medicine garden, mines, Bevan, Goose Spit. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurable utilization of information and guides and websites • Increased perceived value for heritage sites and buildings • Community pride based on heritage 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education Investment</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action Complete the initiatives begun under the Culture and Heritage Corridor Development Projects.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the status of the Cultural and Heritage Corridor project and update feasible project budgets and options • Use the project initiative as the basis of a go-forward valley-wide plan that continues to coordinate cultural development projects. • Expand the heritage tours and walks programs by adding podcasts and on-line maps for public access <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly updated valley-wide plan for heritage. • Prepared materials available for new funding opportunities • Developer engagement in project support. 	<p>Education</p> <p>Advocacy</p> <p>Education</p>

Multicultural and Communications

This cultural cluster includes 30 organizations that have as their focus age, ethnicity, language, film and broadcast, media, and writing.

- The Comox Valley has eight organizations that represent specific ethnicities or language groups. Festivals and events celebrate the cultures.
- This cultural sector includes language and written arts, poetry, web-based communications, film, podcasts and libraries. It includes film societies, local publishers, recording studios, Elder Hostel and North Island College.

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action Improve communications about events and programming throughout the community.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage Shaw Cable to present a running list of events in addition to the information in the local newspapers • A hosted web-site that lists all events, dates, times and places that the public and tourists can access <p>Performance Measure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased attendance and demand for ethnic services and programs. 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action Improve capacity of multicultural groups to collaborate</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a meeting of ethnic organizations to discuss shared resources for administration, rental, programming • Encourage partnerships that co-host two or more ethnic groups for more impact and better use of resources • Seek partnerships with similar groups in Campbell River and Nanaimo to increase impact <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased impact and marketing evidenced 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>in attendance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of cross-over events such as Chinese New Year and Robbie Burns Day – Gung Haggis Fat Choy! 	
<p>Action</p> <p>Increase awareness of the diversity of communications and media groups to the business sector</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a meeting of writers, film and broadcast persons, web designers, to explore the creative industry potential in the Valley. Promote high tech and communications resources to the business community who may use their skills <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased use of creative professionals in marketing, media and broadcast to support business promotion 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>

Culinary and Eco Experiences

Cultural tourism is about the whole experience; the history, sights, tastes and natural surroundings, that when combined with appropriate interpretation and a few 'Oh Wow!' moments make a place unforgettable.

- Natural Pastures' Cheese is currently running an advertisement with the company owner standing in a pristine rainforest, dressed as a Japanese taiko drummer, with his drumstick raised over three huge stacked rounds of wasabi cheese. A perfect blend of culture, food, and eco tourism.
- The Comox Valley is increasing the diversity of specialty and organic crops that will mark the region as a 'not-to-be-missed' experience for foodies. Wine, mead, scotch and internationally award winning cheeses and chocolates are but a few examples of the possibilities.
- Expansion of cross country and mountain bike trails, give visitors year-round access to the mountains While marine safaris, whale watching tours and heli-services can take the eco-enthusiast just about anywhere.
- The majority of 30+ companies offering products and services are private businesses. Group also includes several horticultural and natural history societies that provide lectures and tours.

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<div data-bbox="954 1205 1263 1562" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="607 1575 691 1600">Action</p> <p data-bbox="607 1617 1143 1675">Promote an integrated approach to culture by incorporating the culinary and eco experience</p> <p data-bbox="607 1692 812 1717">Delivery Format</p> <ul data-bbox="620 1734 1256 1883" style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and culture collaboration to develop marketing experiences and packages that blend the cultural experiences. • Engage businesses receiving indirect 	<p data-bbox="1299 1759 1429 1785">Education</p>

Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>economic impact from culture – the restaurant and accommodation sector- in cross promoting cultural packages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with museums to expose the agri- and aqua-cultural history of the region. • Encourage festivals and events providing food to feature local, proximately displayed products • Integrate horticultural information into tours <p>Performance Measure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased bookings of cultural packages • Increased revenues to cultural organizations participating in cross promotions • Increased demand for specialty foods and eco tours • Increased number of nights spent in Valley 	<p>Education Investment</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Identify opportunities for themed foods to enhance cultural gift shop products</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a meeting of specialty food producers to discuss cultural and heritage marketing and specialty product opportunities • Identify local, handmade soaps, jams, sweets and other products that could be sold through museums and cultural events. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earned revenues for cultural organizations increase • Creative local product sales increase 	<p>Education</p> <p>Investment</p>

Cultural Activists – Action Plan

The Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan must also address critical gaps in the functionality and capacity of the individuals and organizations dedicated to cultural pursuits. No matter what the purpose of the organization is, they are structured and served by individuals who require certain skill sets.

Furthermore, a plan that addresses the needs of individuals, organizations and investors is more inclusive than one that addresses only the specifics of the cultural sectors.

The Creative Person

Vision

Any person motivated to earn a living as a creative person has the opportunity to do so in the Comox Valley.

- The Comox Valley is home to at least 1,000 visual artists. Then there are dancers, actors, musicians, lighting and set designers, curators, writers and other creative individuals.
- The difference between a creative person and a successful creative person may lie in the capacity to put together a portfolio, present an exhibition proposal or identify appropriate markets.
- The cultural development plan includes actions for individuals that are not directly involved in production or organization of the cultural events described above but who participate as vendors or entertainers.
- As these individuals achieve a greater degree of financial success they will add to the economic impact of the culture on the region.

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action Improve the capacity of this group to produce works of art, music, and literature, sell product, and generate revenue.</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with North Island College to design a customized professional development program for young artists. • Create overall promotional materials, guides and maps to artists' studios, galleries, and co-ops • Provide access to business and marketing skills for the small business that is the artist, musician, etc • Develop a business and arts forum for the Comox Alley with invited speakers from both sectors to 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Advocacy Education</p> <p>Education</p>

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>stimulate communications and opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose emerging artists to the experiences and advice of successful creators and entrepreneurs • Provide a mechanism for artists to expose their works to a larger market <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased sales of works of art • More successful Canada Council grant applications, increased number of exhibitions • Increased number of artists working full time • Wealth creation through improved employment . • Tourism increased for extended stay classes in music, art, writing. • Growth in business opportunities that supply, promote culture. • More graduating fine arts students have professional skills • Visitor access to a wide range of works of art through galleries, gift shops and studios. • Increased name recognition • Increased interest in cultural pursuits by public • Web-site featuring Comox Valley artists, examples of work and opportunity to purchase on line or contact the artist. 	<p>Education</p>

The Viable Cultural Organization

Vision

Cultural organizations and associations will have access to planning and support tools that will assist them and their creative constituency in maintaining their mission-driven focus, and viable status.

- With more than 75 registered charitable cultural organizations in the Comox Valley the competition for grants, board members, press, audience, space, influence (not to mention power and control) is intense. Boards with long-time dedicated directors protect their hard-won turf. Paid staff work for minimum wages, and consistently contribute as much time again as a volunteer to the organization. Many organizations are described as dysfunctional, squabbling and unable to “get along”. Founding members sometimes hold inordinate amounts of power long after they have left the board.
- The cultural structures usually take the form of a non-profit society with registered charitable status. Although the organization may be very informal in its structure, it is generally acting on behalf of a paid membership. Adherence to generally accepted accounting principles, tax, reporting and labour laws, maintenance of relevant data on performance, accuracy and accountability are the key elements for success in establishing value to the community served.
- No matter what the purpose of the organization, the housekeeping will prove to be critical to growth and development.

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action</p> <p>Improve communication among all organizations in the cultural sector Including:.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theatres, Festivals, Choral Groups, Music Groups, Painting Clubs, Craft and Farmers Markets, Specialty Food Producers, Events on the Same Weekend, Owners of Performance Spaces, Organizations funded by BC Arts Council, Groups who use tents, tables and toilets</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication - Find out who is like you and ask them how they are doing and offer them communication channels. • Groups with similar mandates begin to realize that 	<p style="text-align: center;">Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Education</p>

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>there is as much to be gained by communicating, as there is to lose by being isolated</p> <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A complete map of cultural groups emerges with contact information, • Emerging partnerships, sharing of resources, collaborative solutions to problems, joint marketing, cross promotion • Evidence that groups form networks and develop efficiencies and synergistic relationships 	
<p>Action</p> <p>Improve the track record for grants, funding and sponsorship in organizations</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn to fill out a grant application properly. (i.e. read and follow instructions) • Workshops in advance of major grant deadlines • Experienced volunteer mentor to proof read • Learn how to track performance, deliver and report on outcomes, thank and recognize funders • Workshops and tool kits for performance measurement, identifying outcomes and clear reporting. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility that joint applications may be submitted • Higher success rate • Increase in funding received • Application prepared sooner than the night before. • Greater leverage by working together • Ability to meet partnership requirements • Useful data collected • Data available to demonstrate progress, need, economic impact, • Improved ability to articulate specific outcomes and value 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action</p> <p>Create an incentive system that encourages partner application for funding from local, regional or provincial sources.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a pool of funding for joint projects • Host workshops for collaboration among groups 	<p>Education</p>

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the duplication of projects • Reduce competition for scarce funding and sponsorship and other resources • Greater contact and idea exchange among groups to develop collaborative project. 	
<p>Action Improve governance and leadership in cultural organizations</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the fear level of governance and encourage boards to review their director job descriptions, bylaws, constitution, mission statements, plans, vision, policies, recruitment tactics, and succession planning. • Board development workshops for current board members and people who want to be on the board • Comox Valley Cultural Advocacy certification that the board meets minimum standard of competency training. • Annual rigorous performance reviews of board and staff • Ensure that the goals of the organization are carried out to the satisfaction of the membership., identifying outcomes and clear reporting. • Clear realistic annual targets • Contracts that are performance based • Evidence of board commitment <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in functional capacity of working boards • Attraction of competent board members who do not want the emotional baggage of some boards. • Improved capacity to focus on the mission • Better forward planning • More confidence in the organization by sponsors and funders • Perhaps reduced costs of directors and officers liability insurance • Evidence of goal attainment • Improved sustainability 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Advocacy</p>

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="618 247 992 279">• Increased economic Impact<li data-bbox="618 289 1003 321">• Increased value to the public	

The Venture Culturalists

Vision

Municipal and regional governments will have current data pertaining to the economic and social impacts, and operational health of the cultural agencies and creative industries in the community to inform their investment decisions.

- Funding for cultural facilities/activities is in short supply. Infrastructure is in need of repair, upgrading, expanding or replacing.
- Courtenay has the largest investment in cultural infrastructure. The Regional District does not invest in cultural facilities but has a large investment in sports complexes. Parks in all regions are important cultural assets for festivals and other events.
- Funding for operations goes to four or five large institutions, situated in public buildings, which serve the Valley. What can be done to improve the return on investment in culture and to appreciate the economic and social value contributed by these initiatives?
- Creative people flourish in communities filled with creative energy. We have that community here. When we live in a beautiful place surrounded by cultural choice, diverse foods, creative expression, intellectual stimulation we can begin to take it for granted. Wake up the community to the amazing lifestyle they enjoy and invest in more of it.

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action – City of Courtenay</p> <p>With the substantial investment in regional cultural assets, ensure that cultural policy actions are updated annually and opportunities to report on cultural progress to City council, other municipalities, and the public are not overlooked.</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report to council with economic impact and achievements • Website to include more content reflecting local cultural treasures – people, places • Make cultural policy available on the web site <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustained awareness of cultural sector • Reduction of negative anecdotal stories 	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued progress in implementation of policy 	
<p>Action – City of Courtenay</p> <p>Maintain a ‘wish list’ of long-term priority projects that will be attractive to the other municipalities for support and collaboration in the event that funding becomes available.</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brief description and business case for projects Identify value and community needs Track possible alternative solutions Conduct a survey to determine what cultural amenities would be ranked highest <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued progress in implementation Opportunity to implement through commercial development proposals Potential utilization of vacant commercial or other buildings 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action – Town of Comox</p> <p>Improve the cultural content in the Town of Comox.</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an implementable cultural policy for the Town of Comox Conduct a survey to determine what cultural amenities would be ranked highest Consider the establishment of the <i>Francis Drake Marine Heritage Interpretation Centre</i> in Marina Park to be the first maritime heritage facility on the east coast of Vancouver Island, attract tourists, and to provide appropriate facilities to meet health standards for a weekly farmers and fishers market. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comox becomes a marine tourism Mecca. Public support for cultural amenities is high Demand for new hotel accommodation and restaurants increases Business on Comox Avenue doubles 	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Investment</p>
<p>Action – Village of Cumberland</p> <p>Develop a revitalization plan for the Cumberland Museum and Archives</p> <p>Delivery Format</p>	

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review interpretation panels, display and collection opportunities • Plan for succession of senior staff • Affiliation with other historical towns • Conduct a survey to determine what cultural amenities would be ranked highest <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rejuvenated museum celebrates with opening gala • Museum attracts researchers from China on life in pre-1900 Canada • Visitation to the museum doubles • Stable museum management • Business in Cumberland increases from increased museum visitors. 	<p>Investment Education Education</p>
<p>Action - K'ómoks First Nation Assist K'ómoks First Nation youth to develop traditional carving skills</p> <p>Delivery Format</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a survey to determine what cultural amenities would be ranked highest • In partnership with sponsors such as forest industry construct a carving shed • Collaborate with North Island College to design a customized professional development program for young artists. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded interest and capacity for artistic development in aboriginal youth • Increased capacity to earn a living from art. • Increased public interest and appreciation for K'ómoks culture and traditions. 	<p>Investment Education</p>
<p>Action – Invest Comox Valley Attract Creative Industries that will provide stimulating jobs to the skilled creative individuals living in the Comox Valley and add to the wealth of the community.</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote creative sector awareness of the skill set of the region – music recording, art production, design and graphic skills, research and 	<p>Education</p>

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>interpretation, performance, direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host information trade show in the Valley for creative industry investors to meet with local artists, see the amenities. • Facilitate networking between the creative community with the business leaders • Ask the creative community for ideas on which creative industries they could imagine moving here. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest Comox Valley provides annual evidence of success in meeting this target. • Increase in films shot in the Valley • Relocation of electronic arts and animation studio to Comox Valley • Increase in unique local architecturally designed homes • Increase in export of cultural products, designs • Increased employment of artists in local business • Broader understanding of the skills of the creative community • More artist-run small businesses working at full capacity • Increased utilization of sound recording studios 	<p>Education</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Advocacy</p>

The Champion for Culture

Vision

A Comox Valley Cultural Advocacy Agency will be an arms-length administrative function that identifies infrastructure needs, establishes multi-year, multi-sector partnerships to secure capital for culture and adjudicates operational funding.

The five unique component parts of the Comox Valley, having different needs, budgets, constituency, notions of culture, and capacity, will retain their specific cultural policies and will adopt a common cultural policy that drives common cultural goals.

The region can act in concert to reap the benefits of strategic grant applications, coordinate clearly expressed needs of the cultural community and the enjoy the luxury of frenetic tourism. Culture has no boundaries in the Valley. Regardless of where the facilities are located, the users come from the entire Valley. The needs of each area are different and resources range from miniscule to modest. However, all five governance groups contribute to culture through infrastructure, operational support or funding and local pride. They all require knowledge of the sector, efficiency of investment, performance measures and accountability.

The proposal is to create a Comox Valley Cultural Advocacy Agency as the key driver of the long-term success of culture. A Comox Valley Culture Advocacy Agency acts in the best interest of the cultural sector to ensure that it is functioning at its highest level with an integrated strategy for capital investment, capacity building and peer review. It is the go-to agency for initiating growth strategies or when restructuring is required.

It is important to note that this agency will not replace or take over the functions or the independence of the cultural organizations. It is a support agency with a diversity of resources that individual organizations may not have access to. It also aids the municipalities by providing a consistent reporting and performance measurement assessment function. The agency will not be permitted to withhold or redirect funds designated for specific cultural organizations.

They value respect, collaboration, and discretion and can be relied upon to act professionally in every function. They are arms-length from the funding body and maintain an objective, critical, valley-wide perspective of the needs of the sector. They will build bridges and remove roadblocks in the cultural sector. They will be adequately funded so that performance targets will not be compromised because of insufficient and inadequately qualified staff. Their mandate is to advocate on behalf of Comox Valley

culture to increase prosperity in the sector, improve functionality, and promote excellence in cultural investment.

They will be responsible for the administration of current municipal and regional cultural funding through a grant program to support operating costs and special programs. This provides a service to all municipal funding bodies to maintain an equitable review and reporting mechanism to individual and collectively funding bodies. For example, should municipality B provide funds to an organization in municipality A, they would go through the agency to that the purpose and use of the funds met the conditions stipulated in the application forms.

The grants program serves arts organizations and artists, responds to the needs of organizations and artists and invests in the growth and stability of the cultural sector. As the community grows and changes, this Agency will provide a stable and objective capability able to consider eventually multi-year funding requests.

It will have a board that operates under a policy governance model on behalf of the municipal and regional governments. The board exercises fiduciary oversight of the affairs of the organization. Board members will voluntary positions ideal for corporate and community leaders dedicated to building a culturally vibrant region. To be eligible a director should have a passion for the advancement of culture, exemplary professional business and community minded ethics, a track record of volunteer service and contribution at a municipal or regional level, a strong understanding and experience of public or private board governance. They should reflect the diversity of the region with accomplishments in governance, strategic planning, law, arts, administration, arts education and the for-profit arts.

The Values that this Agency should hold could follow those of one of the more progressive independent Arts Development boards in Calgary². They are:

- Act Wisely: We strive to be aware of what we know and what we do not know and to consider this awareness when we act. We do not let lack of data prevent us from acting wisely.
- Love Creativity: We believe in the potential of all Comox Valley residents is to be creatively engaged in building their region, and in the potential of the Comox Valley to be a creative force for the good of the world.
- Open Systems: None of us is as smart as all of us. We always strive for transparency and openness. We have nothing to hide and much to gain by always sharing, inviting, learning, and collaborating.

² Calgary Arts Development www.calgaryartsdevelopment.com

- **Authenticity:** We see and appreciate the truth of the people, places and projects we deal with.
- **The Word “Yes”:** We create the conditions for success. We strive to see the potential in people and initiatives, and to be part of moving them forward.
- **Diversity:** We deeply appreciate the value created by the diversity that increasingly characterizes the Comox Valley. We recognize and celebrate the importance of the arts in the lives of all citizens, in all parts of the Valley.

Work of this agency would be delivered by a full time qualified paid individual. The funds disbursed flow from the municipal and regional cultural budgets. Specific groups would be grandfathered in at current levels and as resources grow the number of groups and artists would be expanded.

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Action – All Municipalities and Regional District</p> <p>Establish a Comox Valley Cultural Advocacy Agency</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a consistent source of funds for the development of cultural administration that is not available through any other mechanism. • An arms - length body to advance major projects, build consensus in the cultural sector, increase and distribute funding sources and administer the collection of data and performance. • Permanent, full time qualified, staff to liaise with local governments, Invest Comox Valley, cultural organizations, private investors and business and individuals. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural sector buy-in and engagement • More effective use of investment capital • Evidence that groups form networks and develop efficiencies and synergistic relationships • Superior reporting back to funding bodies • A comprehensive database of the size and nature and effectiveness of the cultural sector • Ability to respond to funding opportunities • Reduced overlap in approaches for funding • Better funding applications that coordinate component parts. 	<p>Investment</p> <p>Advocacy</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action – Cultural Advocacy Agency</p>	

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Identify cultural capital infrastructure requirements.</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local governments to secure federal and provincial grants, public support and business to make the cultural and economic case for proceeding • A grid of most needed capital requirements endorsed by the cultural sector • Partnering opportunities for developers to incorporate cultural needs into their plans Make cultural policy available on the web site <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects are given support • A long term facilities strategy is developed • Reduced competition and more political agreement over priorities • Increased public support of the investment process • Increased private sector involvement. 	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Education</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action – Cultural Advocacy Agency</p> <p>Identify all potential grants, awards, recognitions that are applicable to the Comox Valley</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orchestrate applications that will bring funding and greater profile to the region • Preparation and coordination of large grant applications <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awards and attention on the accomplishments of the Comox Valley 	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action – Cultural Advocacy Agency</p> <p>Prepare appropriate application format for operational funding requests for cultural organizations</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve accountability as most municipal and regional district operational funding and grants in aid have no application format, performance or reporting requirements • Annual reporting function and application for funding • Accumulation of baseline data and performance 	

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>measures</p> <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved accountability • Evidence of matching and other resources sought • Improved ability to determine economic impact 	

Strategic Objectives & Implementation Plan	Focus Area
<p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A large body of citizen-advocates who can speak about the cultural experiences available • Growth in volunteerism through awareness of opportunities • Increased satisfaction quotient on annual measure • New members of the community buy-in faster and become passionate citizens. 	
<p>Action Increase public participation in colourful events that make the regions more attractive.</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public invited to plant flowers along roadways • Neighbourhood groups responsible for summer watering and weeding <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded area of beautified public spaces • Increased tourist acknowledgment of flowers • Evidence of increased interest in horticulture 	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>Education</p>
<p>Action Engage the Public - Maintain the cultural activity by encouraging participation, communicating value</p> <p>Delivery Formats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better access to information about what is on and where. <p>Performance Measures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased willingness of public to support cultural initiatives 	<p>Education</p>

Marketing the Cultural Economy

The Comox Valley is a unique 'place.' Consider this cultural vision for the Valley....

..."There are certain places on Earth with an almost mythic capacity to draw us in, to inspire us, and to evoke a quality of spirit, creativity and community that is somehow deeply a part of us. The sights, the sounds, the icons, the design, the traditions, spoken and unspoken, say, This is a place like no other. This place lends itself more easily to inspiration than others - a place that contains within it that perfect, delicate mix of natural and created elements that people find so appealing. It is a place of supernatural beauty with a grand, yet fragile landscape millions of years in the making. This place has a rich cultural heritage, strong creative spirit and, perhaps most importantly it is a place for flat-out fun..." This is Culture Comox Valley.

Simply said, culture is how the Comox Valley lives - incorporating its heritage and embracing its creative future. The expression of this Valley culture takes the form of:

- • Agri-food and Gastronomy
- • Artists, Artisans and Galleries
- • Festivals and Events
- • Heritage and Museums
- • Performing Arts and Music
- • Multi-Cultural Partnerships

The Cultural Marketing of the Valley

The marketing of culture in the Comox Valley will take a unique, less travelled path. The intent of the marketing plan is not to outline the 'usual' ways of marketing culture, rather to think 'out of the box' with creative partnerships and programs that, with time, will earn the Valley the recognition of the 'Island's Cultural Epicentre.' This cultural place we are going to feature is where the creative expression is truly recognized, appreciated and where more and more cultured people want to live and conduct a cultural business. The culture is just felt. This feeling will become the brand essence.

Building on-going cultural brand equity, enhancing and developing unique cultural products and programs, ramping-up for the 2010

Cultural Olympiad, while simultaneously embarking on a consolidated marketing plan necessitates a non-sequential marketing plan.

As such, the Cultural Marketing Plan will serve as an abbreviated tactical action plan that supports the Cultural Development Plan to ensure a quick start to the powerful on-going legacy of cultural development in the Comox Valley.

The Cultural Economy

For the purposes of this marketing plan, the representation of culture and the economy will refer to culture as the producers, and the economy as the consumers or participants in the cultural experience. Writers on the cultural economy suggest that a community plan that stimulates more arts, cultural nodes and lifestyles is intrinsically better than one in which there is minimal focus on culture. The new creative class wants communities with culture. A successful cultural economy maximizes cultural meanings, lifestyles and identities, just as successful economic development maximizes profits and output. Within the cultural milieu, we must attempt to do both - focus on a complimentary balance of cultural producers, cultural experiences and the economic consumer.

Cultural Marketing Goal

The goal of the marketing plan is to raise the profile of culture both externally and within the Valley. The plan will discuss the enhancement and promotion of culture and cultural diversity to benefit the creative community, the citizens, the business sector and the visitors to the Comox Valley.

Cultural Strengths - Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

To attract cultural businesses, market to the visitor, build the artistic sector and fulfill the creative citizen, it is important to articulate what is creatively unique or special about the Valley. The following cultural strengths of the Valley should be considered as communication pillars in all cultural marketing communications:

- Culture in the Comox Valley is not a spectator sport - people just participate
- Citizens - young and old are passionately committed and involved. Like attracts like.
- The natural, unpolluted beauty of the area brings artisans and artists to feel their work and live in the calm, quietness of nature

- Personal image concerns of a bigger city are abandoned which allows creative, inner authenticity to bubble to the surface
- The pristine, rural land supports extensive agri-food production and an emerging gastronomic and culinary tourism experience
- Musicians have the freedom to practice in wide-open spaces as well as within organized groups
- Families move to the Valley for safety and freedom and to give their children 'old fashioned' cultural values
- The school district still funds an arts coordinator who fosters the incubator spirit of culture at a very young age
- Cultural volunteering is proportionally higher in the Valley than elsewhere
- Audiences are very supportive due to the high quality of amateur productions
- Heritage stories abound from the ocean, the mine and First Nations

From greenways to galleries - and so the circle of cultural renewal and legacy continues throughout the Comox Valley.

Cultural Obstacles - What is in Our Way?

The Valley has been discovered. Now let's really put it on the cultural map of 'must visits' while on the island, and enhance the strong community cultural involvement. Below are the noted obstacles to achieving this marketing vision:

'Culture Works'

Clearly an integrated approach to maximizing cultural development and marketing is needed and agreed to by the key stakeholders. Let's call this new, overarching group - 'Culture Works' to give it a creative name, and to differentiate it from involvement with any past or existing organizations. This new organization removes the development and marketing of culture externally from the 4 governing bodies. Staff must be senior and have the ability to envision the collaborative development of the cultural sector and brand.

Competition for Share of the Entertainment Dollar

Cultural groups within the Valley are not inclined to package and promote together, other than to do minimal co-op advertising. With over 50 festivals and events during a given year, it is difficult for all groups to remain viable, and to market themselves to both the visitor and the community in a clear, uncluttered way. People only allocate so much money to cultural entertainment or purchases, so the buying decision must be made easy and

exhibit high value to ask the participant for their time and/or money.

Skill Level

At both the staff (management, marketing) and the professional (actor, musician, artist) level there is a lack of, and an appreciation of highly qualified people. Both groups require adequate remuneration and currently the Valley cultural organizations are not able to, or don't see the value of the professional skill level. Community level cultural endeavours book spaces (the Sid) that could be used to 'raise the cultural bar' and skill level should various professional groups be given a permanent venue to entertain.

Facilities and Funding

Currently there is a shortage of cultural facilities. Going forward, strong coordinated marketing and joint packaging will increase the pressure on existing facilities. Suggestions of a multi-cultural campus, an arena/concert facility and a larger theatre were all mentioned. To support these new facilities and the aging baby-boomer demographic, more higher end hotel accommodation should also be built.

An on-going funding model for Culture Works must be established to ensure continuity. Project by project and year-by-year funding is not optimum for sustained development of the cultural sector.

Cultural Brand Positioning

The Invest Comox Valley positioning line Wildly Sophisticated. Economically Unconventional has worked extremely well for both business and agrifood. A consumer positioning is now needed to dovetail with this business positioning. The consumer line needs to speak to both residents and visitors - it must speak for culture in the entire Valley. The suggestion is to use Culture Comox Valley - Wildly Sophisticated.

If a complimentary cultural add-on is desired, it could be Culture Comox Valley - Wildly Sophisticated. Naturally Creative. These options require further discussion as the culture brand is rolled out and applied to partnered marketing communication pieces.

Cultural Marketing Strategies

Due to the multi-faceted marketing approach to position and launch a strong cultural marketing organization and brand, the following concurrent strategies are recommended:

- Ensure immediate announcement of the new Valley wide cultural organization,
- Culture Works, 'responsible for on-going capacity building, partnership facilitation and marketing of the heritage and culture sector
- Position and differentiate Comox Valley culture and heritage by creating a unique visual identity, brand, attitude, and brand language
- Become a significant community partner in the 2010 Winter Olympics Cultural Olympiad
- Formalize and develop the partnership of agri-food and gastronomy to showcase a strong partnership model
- Drive cultural development, multi-cultural partnerships and cross-cultural product and event packaging within the key target groups
- Create a formal public relations program that constantly works with the trade media
- Become recognized as the 'Island's Cultural Epicentre'

Please refer to the full report and Key messages to target groups in Appendix C.

Conclusions

Integrating the Strategies

The adoption of a Common Cultural Policy for the Comox Valley – in addition to the specific cultural policies already in place in each community – is a first step towards a collaborative and supportive approach to cultural development that will benefit all parts of the valley.

Taking an approach that relies on only the economic benefits, or the tourism marketing or finding agreement on a joint project will not produce the best result for the community.

The Common Cultural Policy is broad in scope, incorporates the general intention of all the policies and practices of the local governments and recognizes four main goals for successful implementation.

Ensure that citizens of the Comox Valley have the opportunity to share, express and experience culture in a region that respects the past, celebrates the present and welcomes the future.

This will be accomplished through:

1. Access to a wide range of cultural experiences and opportunities
2. Enhance community capacity to support and promote cultural activity
3. Encourage excellence in the work of artistic and cultural professional and organizations
4. Foster growth, sustainability and investment in the Comox Valley's cultural industries

Recommendations

Adoption of the Common Cultural Policy by the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and the Comox Valley Regional District as the basis of partnerships and collaborations.

Formation of a transitional Steering Committee to guide the creation of a Cultural Agency.

Identification of funding to support a Cultural Agency that can implement common cultural goals.

Implementation of the Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan

Limitations of the Plan

The plan lacks sufficient amounts of the right ingredients:

Economic Data

Better grassroots analysis of the community assets, skills, and deficiencies, is needed and is outside the scope of this project.

Information about the Cultural Community

Support from the cultural community is critical and can only be built on trust and the expectation that the community voice will be heard. An arms-length agency is likely the only group able to create this atmosphere.

Needs Assessment

A collaboration of the owners of all cultural assets could collectively expose their resources, capacities and identify capital needs. Integrated, collaborative funding proposals with wide support and buy-in are more likely to succeed.

Funding

It will come as no surprise that investment in the sector must come from the taxpayers through their representatives. There will be a risk that some decisions will not return the anticipated benefit. No investment is not an option. With solid information, community participation and a long-term financial plan the risk should be reduced and the return maximized.

Options for Development

Three methods through which the cultural sector can develop, are presented as practical tactics for fulfilling growth of the cultural sector in the region:

Advocacy

Education

Investment

Advocacy	Process	Budget
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of an arms-length agency • Central hub that administers and advocates on behalf of culture • Reports to municipalities on performance and impact of cultural sector – both funded and not funded activities 	<p>Funding already allocated to cultural organizations</p> <p>Support for staff/office \$120,000</p> <p>Could create efficiencies by transfer of cultural responsibilities from municipal staff</p>

Education	Skills Required	Format	Budget
Individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional practice • Grant applications • Mentors • Business Skills • Marketing/Media • Apprenticeship/Intern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers • Free workshops • NIC partnership • Business and Arts connections • On-line tools 	<p>Free to minimal</p> <p>Requires – space, materials, instructors</p>
Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • Grant applications • Performance measures • Volunteer management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-line tools • Volunteers • Free workshops • NIC partnership • Business and 	<p>Free to minimal</p> <p>Requires – space, materials,</p>

Education	Skills Required	Format	Budget
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance • Succession planning • Performance reviews 	Arts connections	instructors
Governments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update cultural agenda • Awareness of economic impact • Support for funding initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports • Surveys • Measurement • Promotion 	Staff time
Invest Comox Valley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local benchmark data on the skills, production and accurate measure of the economic impact of the cultural sector • Understanding of needs of creative industries and how best to meet them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web-site • Brochures • Research specific to creative industries • Regular reporting to levels on government on impact of cultural sector. 	Modest, use staff Benchmark study \$15,000

Investment	Needs	Format	Budget
Individuals & Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studios • Storage • Gallery • Rehearsal space • Presentation space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studio space • Classrooms • Master classes • On-line tools • Sales outlet • Arts Summer • School 	Use of school Utilities Off-set by rental fees, commercial rentals
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital funding for new infrastructure • Valley wide survey of cultural needs • Collaborative approach to funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships with business • Development leverage • Federal provincial funds 	Large – multi-year capital projects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software publishers • Motion picture and video industries • Sound recording studios • Specialized design services • Promoters, organizers of large events • Agents and managers for artists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeting specific creative industries with advantages to relocate • Web and print materials • Advice from sector on their needs • Linkage with other key business sectors • Report on initiatives and success rate 	Part of normal operating budget
--	--	---	---------------------------------

Create Jobs: With an investment in education that includes skill development, marketing and access to studios and workshops for practice and training, individual practitioners in the cultural sector will be to develop sustainable micro-enterprises. A strong festival and gallery network will also provide markets for works. Agents for artists will be able to develop export markets for Comox Valley products.

Stimulate Trade through Cultural Tourism: A rejuvenated heritage sector, increased audience capacity in theatres and powerful festival partnerships will form a long-term economic engine for cultural tourism.

Attract Investment by Creating Live/Work Zones for Artists: Recognition of the ‘Artist in Our Midst’, accommodating zoning, and collaboration with developers will assist in creating artistic hubs. Allocating space for community studios, workshops and class room space will eventually attract ancillary investment in art supply shops, cafes and galleries.

Diversify the Local Economy: Both Comox and Cumberland will benefit from additional or upgraded cultural amenities to act as retail anchors and activity generators to attract and support other businesses and enterprises

Improve Property and Enhance Value: By leveraging the proximity of cultural amenities and through individual artist’s efforts, property aesthetics and increase property value will benefit the entire neighbourhood.

Appendix A Economic Impact Study

Appendix B Comox Valley Case Study

Appendix C Marketing the Cultural Economy

Appendix D Marketing Interview Questions

Comox Valley

Cultural Development Marketing

Name: _____

Company: _____

Positioning

Let's take a step out of your own business for the next little while and pretend you are the Managing Director/President of a newly formed organization in the Comox Valley. Your team is responsible for raising the profile for the entire Valley by focusing on cultural marketing so that the Comox valley is truly a destination like Provence or Tuscany, for example. It is also a place that people really want to live and bring their creative and cultural skills to contribute to the Valley. This Valley is a cultural place like no other.

1. In your new position, who individually or what cultural groups would you ask to be part of your new team? These people would love to be part of telling the world about the amazing cultural experiences of the **whole** Valley?
2. What is the Valley cultural story to the outside world? What do people say about the cultural experience in the Valley? What are 3 key messages to describe it?
3. What is the cultural story to the residents of the Valley? How do we attract more creative people to the Valley? What will it take?
4. What are the 3 biggest strengths that the Valley already has to market culturally?
5. Why is culture in the Comox valley unique and different from other communities on the island? Please be very specific and give as many reasons as possible. Try and find things that no other community could say - that is the key!

6. Is the Valley maximizing the opportunities around its core cultural strengths? How could the Valley improve its cultural marketing? What are the 3 biggest obstacles to achieving strong Valley-wide marketing? What needs to happen to really turn up the jets on marketing culture in the Valley?

7. Thinking totally out of the box, what are some 'wild' ideas you have to stimulate Valley-wide cultural marketing? What are the opportunities we could capitalize on? How do we get a real sense of 'Team Comox Valley' culture going?

9. If we were talking in 2 years, how would we know we had achieved success in marketing culture in the Valley? What things absolutely have to happen for you to feel that the valley has achieved significantly more success than the notoriety it has today.?

10. Taking your Valley-wide Managing Director hat off now, let's focus on your specific business. What do you 'creatively' need to double your business in the next two years?

11. Anything else you would like to add?

Appendix E Cultural Website Critique

Appendix F Comox Valley Cultural Map

The following list is incomplete. It was compiled from many sources and the writer apologizes for errors and omissions.

Festivals/Events

Aboriginal Days
Art in Bloom
Beer Fest
Black Creek Heritage Fair
Book Week Festival
Canada Day
Chinese New Year Festival
Christmas at the Gardens - Kitty Coleman
Comox Nautical Days Society
Comox Valley Art Gallery Studio Tour
Comox Valley Exhibition Assoc. - Fall Fair
Comox Valley Exhibition Fall Fair
Comox Valley Farmer's Market Association
Comox Valley KidsFest
Comox Valley Youth Music Centre Festival
Cumberland Winter Faire and Craftopia
Denman Island Christmas Craft Stroll
Denman Island Home and Garden Tour
Earth Day
Empire Day
Filberg Festival
Heritage Week
High on Chocolate Festival
Highland Games
Hornby Festival of the Arts
K'ómoks Multicultural Festival
Miners' Memorial Day
North Island Festival of Performing Arts
North Island Hot Jazz Festival
Originals Only
Readers and Writers Festival
Reel Youth Film Festival
Shellfish Festival
Showcase Theatre Festival
Snow to Surf Relay Race
Solstice Festival
Taiwanese Lantern Festival
The Highland Games
Vancouver Island Music Fest
Wine Festival
Winter Festival
World Community Film Festival

Performing Arts**Facilities**

Courtenay Little Theatre
Mount Washington Alpine Resort
Native Sons Hall
Old Church Theatre
Sid Williams Civic Theatre
North Island College

Groups

Rainbow Youth Theatre
Trickster's Children Theatre Society
Showcase Festival Society
Brian Kruze School of Dance
Comox Valley Scottish Country Dancers
Gemini Dance Studios
Karuna Centre for Dance & Yoga
Valley Dance Centre
North Island Highland Dancers Association

Music**Facilities**

Comox Valley Youth Music Centre
Cumberland Hotel
Griffin Pub
Joe's Garage
Lorne Hotel
Native Sons Hall
Otter Point Studio
Sound Advice
Union Street Grill and Grotto
Waverley Hotel

Musicians

50 professional musicians
Bands, Cantiamo and other community choirs
Courtenay Youth Music Centre
Cumberland Musicians Collective
Celebration Singers, Georgia Straight Jazz
Society, Hornby Island Festival Society
Mystic Valley Voices
Nova Voce, North Island Choral Society
North Island Hot Jazz Society
Orca Morning Concert Society
Registered Music Teachers
Strathcona Symphony Orchestra

Visual Artists**Facilities**

Comox Valley Art Gallery
Denman Island Arts Centre
Filberg Heritage Lodge & Park
I-Hos Gallery
Kitty Coleman Woodland Gardens
Magnolia Gallery & Garden
Muir Gallery -
North Island College
Pearl Ellis Gallery Of Fine Arts Society
Potters Place
Spirits Of The West Coast Art Gallery
The Artisans Courtyard

Artists

Ablaze Metal Art & Design
Brian Scott Fine Art
Brushworks - 20 artists
Christy Mitchell Fine Art Studio
Comox Valley Architects Club
Comox Valley Camera Club
Comox Valley Needle Arts Guild
Exploration Art Camp
Federation of Canadian Artists - 60
Joe Smith Fine Art
Jonal Fine Art Studio
Maximick Originals
Monday Group - artists
Originals Only - 80 artists
Potters Guild - 70 ceramic artists
Sarah Kerr Photography
Shelley Combs Fine Art & Clay
Waterworks Garden Sculpture
Wool gatherers Guild
Plus many more

Museums and Heritage

Comox Air Force Museum
Comox Archives & Museum
Courtenay & District Museum & Paleontology
Centre
Cumberland Museum & Archives
Filberg Heritage Lodge & Park
Cumberland Heritage Commission

Natural History

Comox Valley Naturalist Society
Lazo March Society
North Island Rhododendron Society
Seedy Saturday
Comox Valley Horticultural Society
LUSH

Cultural Places

19 Wing
Comox Marina
Cumberland Historic Village
Goose Spit
K'ómoks First Nations
Lazo Marsh
Mack Laing Park
Medicine Gardens
Puntledge Reserve
Royston
Royston Wrecks
Union Bay
Weirs

Media Arts/Communications

Facilities

97.3 The Eagle
98.9 Jet FM - Vista Radio
ABC Printing
Comox Valley Echo Newspaper
Comox Valley Health & Recreation Guide
Comox Valley Record Newspaper
Impact Visual Communications
In Focus Magazine & Design
Infinite Concept Software
Island Word
Shaw Cable
World Community Development Education Society

Multicultural

Facilities

North Island Women of Native Ancestry
Wachiay Friendship Centre

Groups

Association francophone de la vallée de Comox
Casa Loma Seniors Village
Comox Valley Celtic Cultural Society
Comox Valley Ukrainian Cultural Society
Dolyna Dancers
Elder Hostel
Evergreen Seniors

Literature

ABC Books & Inner Sanctum
Blue Heron Books
Comox Library
Comox Valley Writers and Poetry Group
Courtenay Library
Laughing Oyster Bookshop

Specialty Food and Beverage

Aquatec Seafoods Ltd
BC Shellfish Grower's Association
Beaufort Vineyard & Estate Winery
Benino Gelato
Beyond the Kitchen Door
Edible Island Whole Foods Market
Fanny Bay Oysters Seafood Shop
Hot Chocolates & Cakebread Artisan Bakery
K'ómoks First Nations
Kingfisher Oceanside Resort & Spa
Middle Mountain Mead
Natural Pastures Cheese Company
Shelter Point Distillery

Other Cultural Experiences

Comox Valley Airport
Desolation Sound Yacht Charters
Discovery Marine Safaris Ltd.
Island Air Ltd.
Island Stretch Limousine Service
Natures Best Tours
Outback Emuzing Ranch
Pacific Coastal Airlines
Sky High Shuttle Service Ltd.
Stubbs Island Whale Watching
Tourism Mount Washington
Tourism Powell River
Trans Isle Touring Service

Enabling Organizations

Central Island Arts Alliance
Comox by the Sea
Comox Recreation Commission
Comox Valley Community Arts Council
Comox Valley Home Based Business Association
Comox Valley Tourism
Courtenay Recreational Association (CRA)
Cumberland Cultural Center
Cumberland Improvement Association
Cumberland Visitor Info Centre
Downtown Courtenay BIA
Hornby Island Arts Council
Royston-Cumberland Lions Club
Vancouver Island Community Connections
Volunteer Comox Valley
Women's Business Network

Education

G.P. Vanier Secondary - Work Experience Office
Highland Secondary School Career Programs
Job Shop, The (C.E.A.S.)
Ministry Of Labour & Citizen's Services
North Island College
School District No. 71 Fine Arts
Service Canada
Sprott - Shaw College Of Business (Courtenay)
Upper Island Assessment & Resource Service
Centre

Appendix G List of Participants

Discussion Groups and Individual Interviews/Meetings

We would like to thank the following individuals who provided input during the preparation of the Comox Valley Cultural Development Plan by participating in various discussion groups, individual interviews and meetings conducted by the consultants.

Cultural Capital Steering Committee

Randy Wiwchar, Director of Community Services, City of Courtenay

Patti Fletcher, Councilor, Town of Comox

Leslie Baird, Councilor, Village of Cumberland

Melinda Knox, Band Manager, K'ómoks First Nation

Erik Eriksson, Director CVEDS

CVEDS Board of Directors 2007/08

Directors

Barbara Price CVRD Area B

Erik Eriksson

CVEDS Staff

John Watson, Executive Director

Geoff Crawford, Research Coordinator

Lara Greasley, Marketing and Communications

Julie Kochanuk, Cultural Capital Coordinator

Public Sector and Non-Profit Organizations

Barb Lemky, Cumberland Museum and Archives

Vincent Dupuis, Showcase Theatre Festival

Jeff Hyslopp, Showcase Theatre Festival

Dallas Stevenson, Arts Council of the Comox Valley

Lucille Riedle, Executive Director, Association francophone vallée de Comox

Linda Perron, Instructor, North Island College

David Mclean, Head, Fine Arts Department, North Island College

Deb Griffiths, Director, Courtenay and District Museum

Tony Martin, Executive Director, Comox Valley Art Gallery

Lt.-Col C.L. MacFarlane CD, Wing Logistics Officer 19 Wing Canadian Forces Base

Al Fraser, Manager, Department of Parks, Recreation and Culture, Town of Comox

Joe Smith, Artist, Originals Only

Brain Scott, Artist

Sylvia Allan, Producer, Filberg Festival

Debra Wiens, Courtenay Little Theatre

Gail Limber, Courtenay Little Theatre

Vicki Weiss, Courtenay Little Theatre

Elsie Griffiths, Canadian Federation of Artists

Blanche Gautier, President, Canadian Federation of Artists

Sofie Slapski, Canadian Federation of Artists

Joanne McClusky, Canadian Federation of Artists

Kim Bannerman, Comox Archives and Museum

Pam Moughton, Board of Directors, Comox Archives and Museum

Karen Dunster, Curator, Comox Archives and Museum

Jeneen Weekes, Comox Valley Music Centre

Kim Stubblefield, Comox Valley Music Centre

Meaghan Cursons, Vancouver Island Music Fest

Marcy Jaster, Vancouver Island Music Fest

Deborah Renz, Sid Williams Theatre

Brian Zimmerman, Kitty Coleman Woodland Gardens

Lorna Gunn, Manager Cultural Services, City of Kelowna

Russell Irvine, Board, Comox Archives and Museum

Ron Bannerman, Comox Valley Heritage Tours

Joanna Ross, Comox Valley Record

Karen Barr, Executive Director, Comox Valley Community Adult Literacy

Kathy Penner, Marketing and Customer Services Manager,
Comox Valley Airport

Tara Newsom, Graphic Designer, In Focus Design

Susan Lewis, Principal, Lewis and Sears Event Management

Wendy Sears, Principal, Lewis and Sears Event Management

Dove Hendren, Chair, Sid Williams Theatre