



Building On Strength:

Arts, Culture and Heritage in the new City of Toronto

Report of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Work Group

August 12, 1997

Life Worth Living

What part of our life is dependent on music? on dance? on colour and image? on the buildings around us that express more than shelter? on our parks and gardens? on the treasures in our houses that make them homes? on the books that changed our lives as children and those that delight us now? on the poetry that we can never forget? on the television that teaches and entertains us? on the magic of a curtain rising in a theatre? on all ceremony and ritual?

Imagine for a few minutes what life would be like without any of it, and rejoice in the wonderful world we have inherited from our artists and that they are still creating for us.

Doris McCarthy, visual artist



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Introduction

Building On Strength: Arts, Culture and Heritage in the new City of Toronto has been prepared by the Arts, Culture and Heritage Work Group for the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commissioners as well as for the Transition Team. A list of the Work Group members is included as Appendix A. In the report you will find:

1. Summary of the Recommendations
2. Background Summary
 - a. Cultural Mandate
 - b. Role of the New City Government – Description of Cultural Activities
 - c. Highlights of the Cultural Inventory
3. Vision for the Future
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 - a. How Do the Seven Municipal Governments Manage Culture?
 - b. Options for Placing Culture in the City's Structure
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Appendix A - List of Arts, Culture and Heritage Work Group Members

Appendix B - Report on Transitional Issues, Options and Recommendations for Culture

Appendix C - Municipal Cultural Inventory

Appendix D - Summary of Cultural Programs in Selected Centres

While the Cultural Inventory included as Appendix C is the most extensive ever assembled, it needs further development. Municipal cultural activity is spread across many departments and agencies, making the inventory process very complex. The Work Group will continue to gather data in the coming months with the objective of having a complete inventory for the new Council in January 1998. Our goal in providing this review is to ensure an orderly transition that maintains quality public service and moves us through the transition period in a positive manner. Development in the areas of options and service delivery models will be ongoing by the Work Group.



The preparation of *Building on Strength: Arts, Culture and Heritage in the new City of Toronto* has been informed by a series of independent consultation processes that began in April 1997 including:

- Metro Round Table on Culture;
- Metro Cultural Network;
- Arts Etobicoke and Scarborough Arts Council/City of Scarborough community consultations;
- Toronto Arts Council Steering Committee; and
- Municipal Heritage Alliance.

These consultations have ensured that the Arts, Culture and Heritage Work Group have heard many voices in the cultural community. They have been a vital part of the exercise and will continue in the months ahead and throughout the transition.




1. Summary of Recommendations

a) Immediate – by January 1, 1998

1. Conduct a full inventory and analysis of arts, heritage and cultural policies, programs, facilities and standards across the seven municipalities;
2. Identify the grant and program needs for all communities across the new City;
3. Develop interim arrangements to ensure that existing programs continue into 1998;
4. Identify and review on-going initiatives, contracts, operating agreements and commitments and the resources required to meet those commitments;
5. Identify reserve funds or other funds committed to specific projects or sites and ensure their maintenance for said purposes;
6. Determine future ownership of collections and acquisitions.

b) Short Term – in 1998

1. Analyse and determine the level of resources (from all sources) required to adequately implement the consolidated arts, heritage and cultural policies;
2. Identify and address the legislative issues facing arts, heritage and cultural policy including the exemption of property taxes for cultural facilities;
3. Identify an in-house policy and research function in the new City's culture unit;
4. Develop a Cultural Grants Policy which responds to the needs of a large, complex and diverse cultural sector;
5. Develop a consolidated policy on Public Art for inclusion in the Official Plan of the new City;
6. Identify the role and structure of advisory bodies and their relationship to Council, Community Councils and Neighbourhood Committees;
7. Create a Toronto Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee and a Toronto Museum Board with representation from existing bodies;
8. Establish direct linkages between all sectors of cultural services including tourism, libraries, archives and cultural industries;
9. Review community access provisions and barrier free access issues to ensure equitable access to all services and facilities;
10. Develop a strategy for the delivery of museum, public history and preservation programs.
11. Establish a mechanism for the Heritage Unit/TACAC to comment on all site plan



applications, zoning/rezoning, building permits and Official Plan amendments.

c) Long Term – by 2000

1. Develop a comprehensive Cultural Policy for the new City;
2. Develop the linkages and partnerships necessary to ensure the integration of the Cultural Policy into the everyday business of the City;
3. Develop a Mission/Mandate statement for arts, culture and heritage which is incorporated and imbedded throughout the Official Plan of the new Toronto;
4. Reconcile any legislative issues;
5. Develop a Cultural Facilities Master Plan which protects cultural facilities and collections for the use of the community and provides consistent standards and policies for their management;
6. On-going review of policies and practices and the delivery of programs and services to the community;
7. Develop and implement a comprehensive Cultural Tourism Policy;
8. Develop a linkage between real estate and culture needs to ensure that property sold or acquired is considered for cultural and community use;
9. Develop long-term capital and maintenance plans including adequate funding for all arts, culture and heritage facilities, sites and collections;
10. Develop a standardized approach to demolition controls, designation, inventory and heritage easements.

The complete list of recommendations can be found in Appendix B.



2. Background Summary

Arts and culture have also played a key role in transforming Toronto into a vibrant and cosmopolitan urban centre with a growing international reputation. Sustaining the critical mass of arts activities and facilities is essential to maintaining our popularity as a cultural and tourism destination.

Greater Toronto, the report of the GTA Task Force

a) Cultural Mandate

Culture and the new City of Toronto: A Solid Foundation


A vibrant cultural life is an urban phenomenon. Major cities can easily provide the resources needed to support a thriving and varied cultural scene. Toronto has the facilities, audiences, training opportunities, diversity of backgrounds and concentration of people working in the cultural sector to produce a richly diverse, exciting cultural life.

Toronto is a major North American centre in some key cultural areas. It is the second largest centre for theatre and third for film production. It provides the largest audiences for film festivals, cinemas and festivals like Caribana.

The City is also home to many national institutions. From museums to performing arts companies to training institutions, many of Canada's cultural resources are centred in Toronto. So too are Canada's two national television networks, and the publishing and sound recording industries. This makes Toronto a natural destination for tourists from across Canada, the U.S and the world. The collections of its art galleries and museums, distinctive heritage, world class zoo and botanical gardens distinguish Toronto as an international cultural centre.

Tourists and residents alike are also attracted by the international calibre of major annual festivals. These include Caribana, The Toronto International Film Festival, the International Festival of Authors, jazz festivals, fringe festivals of theatre and dance, and more. Blockbuster events at the Royal Ontario Museum, Art Gallery of Ontario, Ontario Science Centre, and the Metro Toronto Zoo attract tourists while providing cultural opportunities to residents.

Interest, pride and involvement in local heritage have expanded. There is a growing appreciation throughout the City's communities of the value and importance of heritage in



defining their identity, creating a sense of place and enhancing quality of life. Our many museums provide programs and special events that encourage residents and visitors to celebrate that heritage.

At the same time, participation in recreational and semi-professional cultural activity like art classes and community music, dance and theatre groups is growing and thriving. In the past twenty years, recreation departments across the City have increased their arts and cultural programming and support to artists and cultural organizations to nurture the development of the cultural sector, artists and audiences.

The increasing ethno-racial and Aboriginal diversity of Toronto's population means that its cultural life is unlike any other in the world. Contributions and collaborations from other cultures are playing a more prominent role in the culture of Toronto and the City is now a vibrant centre for culture expressed by people from all over the world.

The Economic Impact of Culture

Our support infrastructure and business services are high quality although frankly no better than some other cities, and, in the case of airports, sometimes worse. What really sets Toronto apart is its quality of life which is critical to companies that can be located anywhere. As one executive put it, "I could live anywhere. I choose Toronto despite the weather because no other city in North America combines so many cultural opportunities in a place where my wife is not afraid at night".

The Fourth Era: The Economic Challenges Facing the GTA, the Boston Consulting Group

The cultural sector is an essential part of the economy of Toronto and makes a major contribution to its vitality. The impact of the sector is in part reflected by:

- 123,000 direct and indirect jobs;
- 9.7% of the City's total workforce; and
- contribution of \$7.1 billion dollars to Canada's Gross Domestic Product (*Statistics Canada*).
- generation of \$880 million in revenue for all levels of government (*Ontario Arts Council*).
- cultural tourism which has a \$1 billion impact on Toronto (*Tourism Toronto*).



Towards a Cultural Mandate


The theatre community has developed into one of the liveliest in North America, and its television and film-production capabilities, combined with the cheap Canadian dollar, have turned the city into Hollywood North. In Margaret Atwood, Michael Ondaatje, and the late Robertson Davies, Toronto has also produced some of the most powerful novelists in the English language. Former New Yorker Jane Jacobs, who wrote “The Death and Life of Great American Cities” and now lives in Toronto, once called it “the most hopeful and healthy city in North America”.

Richard Conniff, National Geographic, June, 1996

The Work Group has started to identify the fundamental elements that would form part of the City’s cultural mandate. The City’s cultural mission will be to:

- recognize the essential role that culture plays in the social and economic life of the City;
- encourage the creative, open expression of ideas through all art forms and the full participation of residents and visitors;
- foster the health and development of the cultural sector (including arts, heritage, cultural industries and libraries) by integrating cultural policy with all corporate objectives, delivering financial support, providing art and heritage facilities and a wide range of cultural programs;
- strengthen and support diversity of cultural expression and the many, diverse communities of the City;
- identify, preserve and interpret the heritage of the City; and
- encourage partnerships and linkages amongst cultural organizations and with the broader community to increase the scope, influence and appreciation of culture.

These elements are similar to the Basic Assumptions developed by the Round Table on Culture, the Toronto Arts Council and the Community Arts Councils and provide a point of departure that can now be refined through community consultation.



b) The Role of the City of Toronto Government - Description of Cultural Activities

The concept of heritage means different things to different people, from the history of an area to its natural environment, from its museums and historic buildings to its local traditions and culture. Heritage is what we inherit from the past and what we pass on to the future. It is a legacy we present to all.

Municipal Heritage Alliance

The Cultural Inventory prepared by the Work Group has divided the City's cultural services into the following categories:

- A. Cultural policy and planning;
- B. Cultural research;
- C. Cultural promotion and tourism;
- D. Facilities including major performing arts buildings, museums, community arts facilities and artist live/work spaces;
- E. Heritage Services including museums, public history programs, preservation and designation of built and natural heritage;
- F. Financial support including grants, loan and line of credit guarantees and tax policy;
- G. Public art including private developer projects and moveable art collections;
- H. Arts programming and services including classes, arts events and civic square performances;
- I. Community development includes support of professional, semi-professional and community organizations and artists; and
- J. Cultural industries support including film and TV liaison and civic awards programs.

In addition the Work Group noted the affinity that this group of services has with those offered by Archives and Libraries. The Group intends to explore these linkages further but has not included these two important functions with the list of cultural services. The Work Group also notes the important contribution made by the many municipal agencies that manage cultural facilities (St. Lawrence Centre, Exhibition Place, the Hummingbird Centre etc.). This report assumes that the current governance structure will continue.

c) Highlights of the Cultural Inventory

The inventory of cultural activities and services in the current seven municipalities demonstrates the large and fundamental role that the new City will play in the development of the cultural sector. An analysis of the Inventory provides a sense of the richness and quality of the sector and the many assets that should be treasured and preserved. The following points are highlights of the Cultural Inventory and further detail can be found in Appendix C.

- Cultural services in the current seven municipalities are delivered by over **735** staff working in departments and agencies with a total gross budget of **\$98 million** and a net budget of over **\$31 million**.
- The City will inherit **75** arts, culture and heritage facilities; **53** that it operates and **22** that are operated by others;
- The City will own **152** listed or designated heritage buildings, and include in its boundaries **646** designated and over **5,000** listed properties;
- A total grants budget of **\$12.7 million** (including arts and heritage grants, and direct payments to cultural organizations);
- A large public art collection that is in the process of adding **17** private sector developer projects and **8** government projects;
- Community cultural programs that include over **1,700** instructional programs serving over **215,000** individuals;
- Few resources are dedicated to the area of cultural promotion and tourism identifying this as underserved in the current structure and requiring more attention if the sector is to reach its goals and potential.


3. A Vision for the Future

One night, I had a dream. I got off the bus at College - it was when we were moving College Street so it would hook up with Carlton - and came to this area I had never been to. I saw fountains where there used to be an intersection. What was strange was that I knew my way around. I knew that soon I should turn and see a garden and more fountains. When I woke from the dream the sense of familiarity kept tugging me all day. In my dream the next night I was walking in a mysterious park off Spadina Avenue. The following day I was lunching with the architect John Lyle. I told him of these landscapes and he began to laugh. "These are real," he said. "Where?" I asked. "In Toronto." It turned out I was dreaming about projects for the city that had been rejected over the years. Wonderful things that were said to be too vulgar or expensive, too this too that. And I was walking through these places, beside the traffic circle at Yonge and Bloor, down the proposed Federal Avenue to Union Station. Lyle was right. These were all real places. They could have existed. I mean the Bloor Street Viaduct and this building here are just a hint of what could have been done here.

Michael Ondaatje from *In the Skin of a Lion*

The Work Group on Arts, Culture and Heritage is aware that the Transition Team has initiated a "vision" exercise looking forward to the year 2025. The Work Group hopes that the cultural goals can be realized sooner and has worked toward a target year of 2005 in order to build on the strength and momentum of the sector. Building on the strength of our achievements and "best practices" which include the City of Toronto 1% for public art, peer assessment for the grants programs and the protection of designated buildings from demolition, by 2005, the City of Toronto will have:

- Completed and implemented a ground breaking Cultural Plan that places culture at the heart of the City's business;
- Established the City as the #1 cultural tourism destination in North America - "Festival
- Addressed needs across the City by developing, managing and maintaining first-rate cultural facilities;
- Created a federation of local museums with joint promotion and resource sharing;
- Strengthened incentives for heritage preservation;
- Strengthened arts, culture and heritage organizations in every part of the City by increasing the grants budget to \$20 million;

- 
- Become known as “the City for Public Art” with a large diverse collection that it aggressively promotes;
 - Taken arts programs and cultural events into all parts of the City and increased its assistance to professional, semi-professional and community groups; and
 - Become the film, TV, broadcasting and design capital of North America.

The idea of preservation -- of a single house or a whole neighbourhood -- should begin at the street level and work upward, rather than at the federal or provincial level working down. It is the citizen in the community who is the best judge of the value of his inheritance, who most appreciates the buildings in his environment, and who, in the final analysis, will be the biggest loser without his past.

Ann Falkner from *Without Our Past?*



4. Service Delivery and Organizational Options

a. How Do the Current Seven Municipal Governments Manage Culture?

Arts & Heritage Services

In East York, arts and heritage services including the operation of Todmorden Mills Museum are provided by the Parks, Recreation and Operations Department. In Etobicoke, the Parks and Recreation Services Department, the Etobicoke Historical Board and the Municipal Arts Commission deliver cultural services.

North York services are concentrated in the Parks and Recreation Department including the operation of museums and sites, heritage preservation, arts services and community development. The North York Performing Arts Centre Corporation manages the Ford Centre.

In Scarborough, the Recreation, Parks and Culture Department and the Scarborough Historical Museum Board deliver arts and heritage services. York arts and culture functions are in the Community Services Department and Clerk's works with the York Historical Committee on heritage issues.

At Metro, the arts and heritage functions are centred in Parks and Culture. Other Metro departments with a role in culture include Clerk's (Metro Archives), Corporate and Human Resources (maintenance of heritage properties) and Planning (heritage policy). Metro has also established several agencies to manage cultural functions including the Hummingbird Centre, Exhibition Place and the Metro Toronto Zoo.

The City of Toronto's cultural programs are decentralized and are administered by a variety of arm's-length agencies and departments. Examples of arm's-length agencies are the Toronto Arts Council (grants) and Heritage Toronto (public history programs, museum management and heritage preservation). Examples of departments are Urban Development Services (public art, cultural tourism and festivals), Clerk's (art collection, Market Gallery), Parks and Recreation (Riverdale Farm, Sculpture Garden).

The support for the municipal Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committees and the programming of the civic squares falls under a variety of departments. In all of the municipalities, the provision of cultural services takes place in partnership with community organizations and volunteers.



Cultural Industries Support

While the cultural industries have been primary concerns for the federal and provincial governments, the municipal governments have played a relatively minor role. The issuing of permits for film and TV location shooting in public buildings and on public land is the major support for cultural industries provided by the seven municipal governments. The City of Toronto Film and TV Office issues permits for the City's properties and promotes the City as a venue for productions.

b) Options for Placing Culture in the City's Structure

The Work Group has identified the need for a co-ordinated cultural policy and program direction as key requirements for the new City. The Group believes that the City must bring equity to the delivery of cultural services and develop a common cultural mandate and vision.

The need to bring focus and energy to the City's management of its cultural activities is the underpinning of the structural options under consideration. The Work Group presents five options for the reporting relationship of culture in the new City. The options are presented in random order and indicate no preference on the part of the Group. It should be noted that complete consensus was not reached by the group on the endorsement of each of these models. A further discussion on reporting relationships will be possible when the overall structure for the new City government has been decided.

Following the discussion of the five options is a section giving two functional models for cultural service delivery. These models can be applied to Options One through Four. Option Five calls for a decentralized method of service delivery and the Work Group has not yet explored the possible models.

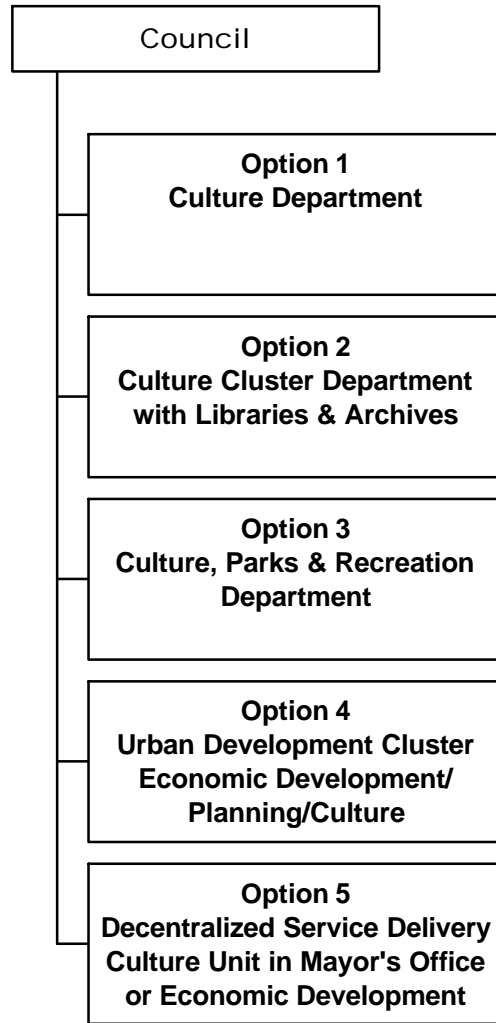
Option One – Culture Department

In Option One all of the cultural activities are grouped in a stand-alone department with culture as its primary mandate. The department provides a strong policy focus and stands as a signal to the world that the new City views culture as a high priority. This approach gives culture profile and visibility and is in keeping with major cities like New York and Chicago.

On the negative side, this option would alter many of the established relationships with Economic Development, Planning and Parks and Recreation. A large department may also become a target during a budget cutting exercise


Option Two – Culture Cluster Department including Archives and Libraries

Culture - Reporting Structure



Option Two is similar to Option One but creates a Culture Cluster Department that includes Archives and Libraries. This option is in keeping with the way the provincial and federal governments approach culture and would draw together three interests that would have critical mass and impact. On the negative side, this option disrupts Archives traditional linkage with Clerk's and corporate record's management. It also would diminish the separate status of the current library system.

Option Three – Culture, Parks and Recreation Department



In Option Three all of the cultural activities except Archives and Libraries are linked with Parks and Recreation to form one department. This option provides a good fit for the cultural activities that focus on community development, recreational programming and classes, support for community organizations and the development, management and preservation of cultural facilities, including museums. On the negative side, this option is not a good fit for those activities that support professional cultural activity including financial support, cultural industries support and public art linked to urban planning. In addition, Culture requires a strong policy focus that has not traditionally been a major part of Parks and Recreation.

Option Four – Urban Development Cluster under a Board of Management

Option Four assumes that the new City government will adopt a Board of Management structure similar to the current City of Toronto model. The same broad grouping of cultural services would form a distinct part of the Urban Development cluster with Economic Development and Planning. This model emphasizes the professional nature of the cultural sector and maintains many of the existing linkages for heritage preservation. On the negative side, the cluster is not a good fit for the programming, classes and community development currently undertaken by Parks and Recreation or for the development, management and preservation of cultural facilities.

Option Five – Decentralized Delivery with Culture Unit in the Mayor’s Office or Economic Development

Option Five maintains the decentralized service delivery that currently exists in the City of Toronto. The important addition is the creation of a central office to provide co-ordination through the development of cultural policy. The culture unit would need to be centrally located and could be attached to the Mayor’s Office or with Economic Development. This option builds upon the current structural relationships with Economic Development, Planning, Parks and Recreation, Clerk’s etc. and would ease the transition process. On the negative side, it would limit the creative synergy and focus of employees from across the cultural sector working closely together.

c) Functional Models for Service Delivery

The Arts, Culture and Heritage Work Group has determined that there are two functional models for the delivery of cultural services that the Group can support. The models are summarized on the accompanying organizational charts.



Models A & B

Both models call for the establishment of a central policy, research and promotion function that supports all of the other program areas. Each model links financial support, public art, facilities, community development, heritage services and cultural industries support as cultural services. Both models show a relationship with cultural facilities but it is assumed that the current boards and operating structures will remain. Common to both is a Public Art Advisory Committee/Commission and a Film Advisory Committee appointed by Council to advise staff.

The two options differ in the way the City would deliver financial support and heritage services.

Model A

In Model A, the grant function is delegated to a Council-appointed Grant Advisory Committee that makes allocation recommendations to City Council for approval. The Grant Committee does not hire its own staff but is supported by the Culture unit. In a similar way, Council appoints a Toronto Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee and a Museum Board to report directly to Council on the preservation and designation of buildings, museum operations and on the delivery of heritage services. The Committees do not manage facilities and do not hire their own staff.

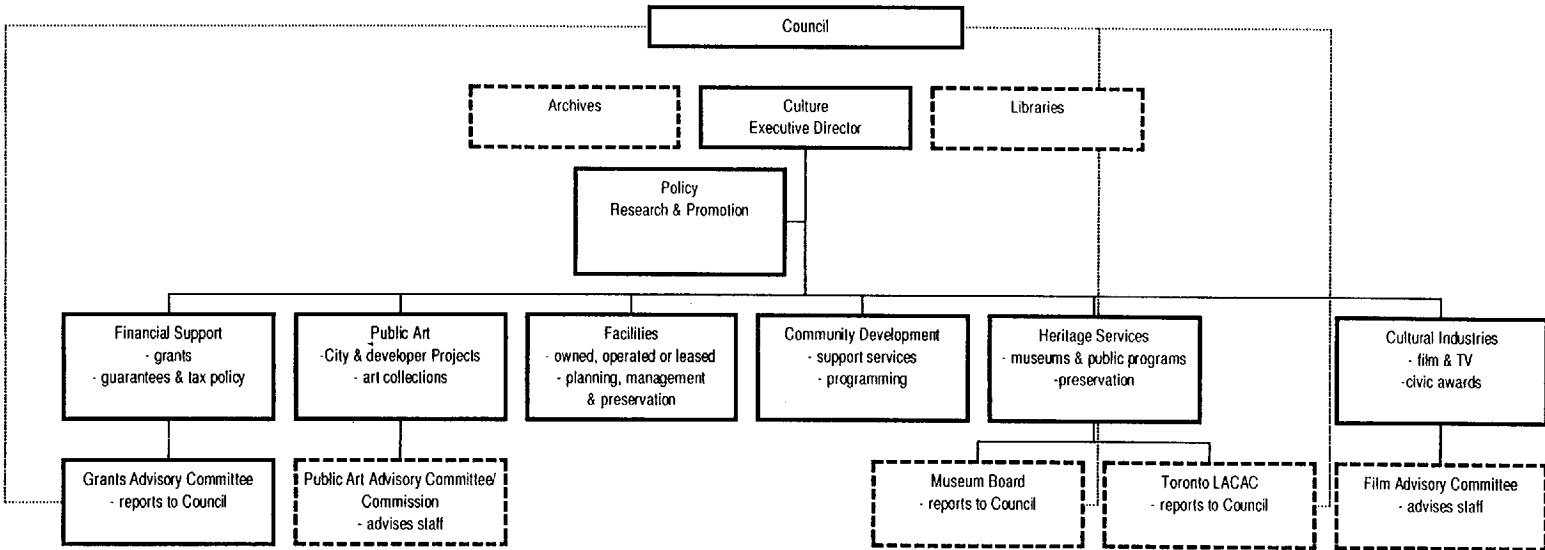
Model A requires Council approval for all cultural activities and all cultural staff are City employees.

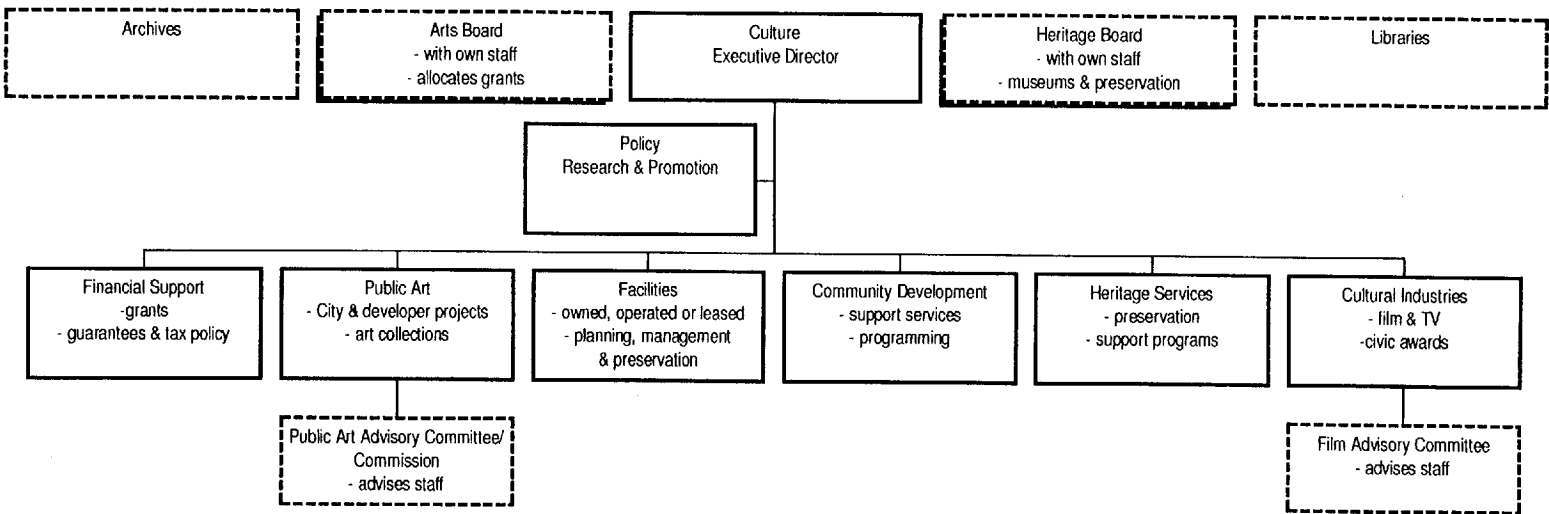
Model B

By contrast, in Model B Council appoints some or all of the members of an Arts Board to manage the grant function. The Board hires its own staff and allocates the grants according to established criteria but Council does not approve the individual allocations. In a similar way, Council appoints some or all of the members of a Heritage Board to deliver Heritage services. The Heritage Board would hire its own staff, manage the museums and heritage sites, provide public heritage programs and report to Council as part of the preservation process. In this model, there would continue to be a role for City staff in the areas of financial support and heritage services.

This model makes the Arts and Heritage Boards independent of the City bureaucracy.

**Arts Culture &
Heritage
Service Delivery
Model "A"**





Arts Culture & Heritage Service Delivery Model "B"



5. Potential Cost Savings

The Work Group wants to be clear on the issue of potential cost savings. Although the arts, culture and heritage may be able to achieve some savings through the reduction of duplication and increased efficiency, the Report on Transitional Issues clearly points to many underserved areas which will require increased investment by the City. The Work Group feels that this need may be partially addressed through the realignment of resources and through the identification of new sources of revenue.

Efficiencies can be realized through greater co-ordination of cultural services. For example the new City can pursue:

- Collaboration of marketing, payroll, box office, etc. among performing arts facilities.
- Utilization of all cultural facilities to the maximum.
- Administrative efficiencies among museums with consolidated marketing, public relations programs and bulk purchasing.
- Reduce duplication in the grant process and streamline the application process.
- Any arm's-length agencies could realize cost savings by sharing the costs of administration, accommodation and payroll.

The City's cultural programs can increase earned revenue over several years by:

- An aggressive donor campaign for public art projects, monument restoration, preservation of heritage buildings and sites.
- Lease unused space for artist studios.
- Increased sponsorship for facilities and programs.
- Rationalized fees for community programs and classes.
- Co-ordinated approach to marketing cultural facilities and heritage resources for filming, photography and rentals.
- Fees for service for research and the documentation associated with development applications.
- Parking revenue.
- Arts, Culture and Heritage lottery.



6. Conclusion

The creation of the new City of Toronto is an historic opportunity for the development of Arts, Culture and Heritage in the City. The Work Group can envision a day, not many years from now, when Toronto's cultural life is the envy of the world. We ask for the chance to seize that future.

The choices are: making Toronto into a world-class centre easily on par with such luminous, thriving centres as Barcelona, Rome or Paris, or making it an insignificant backwater, culturally, economically, politically – a place nobody visits.

Tomson Highway, playwright



Appendix A: Municipal Arts, Culture and Heritage Work Group

Kathleen Sharpe, Metro Parks and Culture, Chair
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