

Municipal Cultural Policy

Town of Hawkesbury

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Message from the Mayor

The Town of Hawkesbury is currently at an important crossroads in its development, and culture will play an important role in its future. In fact, a collective decision was taken to protect our town's distinct traits, be they material, spiritual, intellectual or emotional, through the adoption of a cultural policy.

Already conscious of the qualities that distinguish our community, we recognize that these distinctions needed to be protected. This cultural policy will enable us to do exactly that and more; innovatively and gradually guiding us, individually and as whole, as our identity evolves over the following years.

We recognize the fact that culture has woven the very fabric of our municipality. This policy will consolidate our past, articulate the present and direct our future on several levels, including resource management and economic/tourism development. These are the reasons why we have unanimously approved the guiding principles of our cultural policy.

This policy reflects and respects our past. It also offers a snapshot of our present and will enrich our future, insuring a long-term, sustainable political commitment in order to shape a common cultural vision for all, while striving to improve the citizens of Hawkesbury's quality of life.

Finally, members of the community were involved, through consultation and collective reflection, in the preparation of this document, and we are proud to recognize their precious support. Through their contribution, this policy guarantees that future growth in the municipality will respect the richness and harmony of our cultural, artistic, environmental and patrimonial way of life.

The Town of Hawkesbury will become even more dynamic, vibrant and open to the world, thanks to this cultural policy!

The Mayor of the Town of Hawkesbury,

René Berthiaume

Vision

The Town of Hawkesbury is committed to its own cultural development. It is motivated by a constant desire to improve its residents' quality of life, through the promotion of targeted activities that are collectively recognized and serve as focal points for its population. The cultural policy channels the actions and efforts of each to advance its cultural development. Therefore, the Town of Hawkesbury is firmly committed to the development and orientation of arts and culture.

Our residents need access to many arts-related activities, and access to culture needs to be facilitated. They require ongoing support in terms of providing a systematic development of the arts and culture, creating favorable conditions in which culture and the arts can flourish will inevitably diversify and facilitate access to cultural and artistic activities.

For our Town to respond to the varying artistic and cultural aspirations of its residents, it is essential that partnerships are established within the community. Partnerships should be structured, with clearly defined terms and political support, taking into consideration the town's financial capacity while building financial partnerships with private and public funders, including the schools.

Our cultural policy, our community partners of all types and the residents of Hawkesbury must work together to in order for the community to develop its own culture, one that they will make their own and be proud of, individually and collectively. Our distinct brand is our own, for one and all, and that is precisely where our cultural policy will play a role in bringing us together.

The citizens of Hawkesbury have forever spoken of cultural affirmation and identity, and this policy was necessary. Municipal leaders are increasingly aware of the crucial contributions that arts and culture have on our town as it grows to play become a major contributor in the region's cultural vibrancy, both in Ontario and Quebec. It was therefore imperative that guiding principles be defined.

Guiding Principles

1. The Town of Hawkesbury is a leader of cultural development for the community.
2. The Town of Hawkesbury assigns priority to the cultural activities offered by its services and supports initiatives from the community.
3. The Town of Hawkesbury's approach is to promote discussion for the establishment of stakeholder partnerships with public and private funders and schools for the benefit of cultural and economic development and tourism.
4. Culture is an asset for the community and, accordingly, the Town of Hawkesbury values cultural expression, practice and dissemination by its residents, regardless of age, status, language or ethnicity.
5. The Town of Hawkesbury values its artists and recognizes them as ambassadors of our community's dynamic culture, insuring that future generations have access to each arts discipline.
6. Taking into consideration the fact that the majority of the Town of Hawkesbury's citizens speak French, its cultural outreach is assured by its openness to dialogue and collaboration with the surrounding municipalities in both Ontario and Quebec.
7. Culture is an integral part of the Town of Hawkesbury's economic and tourism development strategy.

These principles convey the energy that is needed for the development of our cultural identity and will inspire our decisions and actions in terms of the arts and culture.

We therefore intend to encourage any initiative that promotes the arts and heightens the Town's image, further encouraging tourism and socioeconomic development.

Defining Arts and Culture

- An artist is constantly working to develop his/her art form. The artist requires an audience, creating original work that entertains, provokes, and/or is analyzed. The work is shared, is innovative and open for interpretation, but will always be unique.
- The created artwork will generate thought, the audience will evolve; the artist's "culture" is therefore emanated from the nature of the work. As the work is appreciated and interpreted, it depends on critical analysis, opinions which also evolve. The artwork can also be a vehicle to explore original thoughts, ideas, themes that the audience had never explored before; it opens minds and removes barriers.
- Artistic creation and production are figureheads that can make the municipality a vibrant and exciting cultural crucible, both within its own boundaries and through projects that permit mutual exchanges with other municipalities and other artists.

Cultural Outreach

Culture is:

- Understanding the past so it becomes a legacy.
- Being aware of the present in order to better appreciate the wealth of our resources.
- To irrepresibly want to create a future instead of copying the past.
- Recognizing yourself in the interests of a society as a whole.
- Feeding on the experiences of the individuals around you, becoming part of a common environment that is owned by all.
- Confirming that through collaboration, we can flourish.
- Acting and reacting spontaneously to provoke thought.
- Defining yourself, as an individual, thus creating your own authenticity.
- Expressing yourself in a multitude of ways so that your ideas become reality.
- Questioning and breaking norms and traditions.
- Provoking progress.

- Understanding the crucial contribution every individual makes to the evolution of a society.
- Understanding your role as an integral part of your society.
- Taking full responsibility on how you exercise your freedom.

Cultural outreach is the art of provoking emotions, self-awareness, thought, understanding and expression, by each in order to better understand their place in a society that values them in their entirety; it means prompting people to take action, to keep life perpetually moving forward.

A cultural activity is any activity that values an individual's roots and beliefs and/or a community's constant ebullience, relying on the individual's initiative and innovative expression of his/her identity where it intersects with the pre-established social norms.

An artistic activity is any activity undertaken with the objective of innovative expression and creativity, through a variety of projects. The arts perpetuate a culture in a state of constant movement, with the ultimate goal of always going beyond the boundaries, for which the product and/or techniques are appreciated by qualitative rather than quantitative standards.

Heritage and Museums

Heritage

Heritage is found in the things left to us by our ancestors. It is defined by, and can be seen in, archaeology, the natural environment, architecture and the decorative arts, and in works, collections, relics and myths.

Patrimonial spaces are precious to us, particularly when they evoke awe or splendour. The exceptional beauty of the natural environment along the banks of the Ottawa River gives the Town of Hawkesbury an opportunity to make it a unique place.

In terms of heritage, the Town of Hawkesbury commits to:

- Remembering the people of Hawkesbury who have marked history, and their stories, encouraging the production of heritage-oriented educational programs;
- Identifying heritage buildings, through signage and historical legends, and implementing a plan, including a by-law, to ensure the protection, preservation and conservation of these buildings;
- Enhancing and protecting green spaces, including tree preservation, which adds to the quality of life, preservation of the heritage landscape and historical zoning, and the restoration of areas to their natural form;
- Identifying a safe place where historical works and collections can be preserved and classified, and confirming the role of the archives as the hub of our collective memory and distinct identity.

Museums

A place or institution where a collection of works and objects of artistic, cultural, scientific or technical interest are preserved exposed and emphasized.

In terms of museums, the Town of Hawkesbury is committed to:

- Doing a thorough analytical study of storage and preservation needs for municipal collections, works of art, relics and vestiges of the past.
- Identifying a space where heritage and/or artistic objects and works of all types can be preserved and classified.

Library and Literary Arts

Library

The library is often an individual's first contact with culture. It extends and supports academic institutions, since it offers to the public the documents they need to intellectually grow outside of teaching institutions.

Documentary resources, services and animation are available to our residents and organizations through the Hawkesbury Public Library, serving to meet the community's educational, informational and recreational needs. The Library offers literary collections and services to people of all ages in an inviting, pleasant and comfortable space. It manages the available resources effectively, achieving the most efficient results. The Library recognizes its users' right to intellectual freedom and protects the confidentiality of their activities.

The Library assumes the following roles:

A door to knowledge for the local youth

The Library offers appropriate documentary resources, activities and services for the youth and the institutions that serve them, in a dynamic space that is suited to their needs. The Library will strive to instil in them a love for reading and intellectual curiosity.

General Interest Documentation Centre

The Library offers a collection of general interest documents in a variety of formats, to encourage reading and meet the public's recreational and informational needs.

Reference Library

The Library makes research documentation readily available to users. It aims to develop its users' research techniques.

Local History and Genealogy Research Centre

The Library makes space available to members of *La Seigneurie, centre de généalogie et d'histoire incorporé*, where they can maintain the Centre's collection and carry out research.

In relation to the Library, the Town of Hawkesbury is committed to:

- Encouraging and promoting cultural recreation, access to information and continuing education for all members of the public, as indicated in the Public Library's mission;
- Continuing to support the Library financially, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport;
- Updating the documentary resources and offered services;
- Conserving municipal documents and documents considered to be important to the Town's heritage, by entrusting them to the Library;
- Ensuring the promotion of reading;
- Optimizing the dissemination of information;
- Ensuring access to the regional archives for research or dissemination purposes.

Literary Arts

All written works, whether fiction or non-fiction, which are published for profit, whether in print or electronic format, and their authors. The literary arts also include the text form of any performance or improvisation, whether for profit or not.

In terms of the literary arts, the Town of Hawkesbury is committed to:

- Recognizing the writer's studio as a workspace for creation and analysis;
- Promoting and supporting events that encourage discussions between writers and the audience and/or the media, such as public readings, creative workshops and theoretical and interactive presentations;
- Contributing to the development and establishment of writers' circles, where publications would be sold or workshops and readings held;
- Encouraging the holding of festivals for literary creation, dissemination and interaction;
- Promoting literature in tourism and civic infrastructure, such as public/municipal buildings.

Performing Arts

A focus on performing arts is crucial for our municipality and includes music, theatre and dance, in all their forms.

In terms of the performing arts, the Town of Hawkesbury is committed to:

- Acquiring, developing, maintaining and managing a permanent space for performances, in partnership with organizations and creators, while encouraging tangible efforts to create partnerships with the private sector;
- Enhancing presented activities by creators and performers, in an effort to encourage and increase outreach;
- Promoting cultural organizations and supporting their programming;
- Establishing a closer working relationship between the Town and the organizations, ensuring that the performing arts are well presented ;
- Sharing human resources requirements and other services, when needed, to support non-profit organizations in their presentations of artistic productions.

Arts and Crafts, Public Arts and Media Arts

Arts and Crafts

Arts and crafts include every form and process that combines techniques of manipulating and arranging materials, and the spaces and tools in which the public has access to for this purpose.

In relation to arts and crafts, the Town of Hawkesbury is committed to:

- Recognizing the artist's studio as a space for creation and as a workplace;
- Contributing to the development of an exhibition centre, with the spatial organization and technical equipment needed;
- Promoting the organization and presentation of exhibits, showcases and workshops, facilitating artists' access to the public;
- Encouraging collections for dissemination, while preserving the integrity of each discipline that makes up the realm of arts and crafts;
- Promoting artistic participation in the aesthetic conception of tourism and civil spaces, for instance public buildings.

Public Arts

The public arts involve spatial arrangement and planning, through thematic, technical and strategic development; where practicality and creativity can converge. They are an artistic creation erected or placed, following approval, on public sites.

In relation to the public arts, the Town of Hawkesbury is committed to:

- Assigning a key role to the artists who work in the community in the design and production of its urban infrastructure, the arrangement and naming of its spaces;
- Assigning spaces that will become sites for artistic and esthetic display;
- Planning and organizing the urban concept together with artists from all disciplines, to initiate a restructuring along a variety of themes;
- Support the democratic process by which artists would be invited to propose tourism and public infrastructure projects;
- Creating interest in tourism through its corresponding architecture and signage.

Media Arts

The media arts include graphic arts, video production, audio production, visual and sound arrangements and forms of arts and crafts that undergo mechanical, electronic and digital transformation.

In relation to the media arts, the Town of Hawkesbury is committed to:

- Encouraging local and native graphic designers, multimedia producers and directors, programmers and media agents, in the Town's economic & touristic development initiatives;
- Recognizing print and electronic formats, digital signage, social networks, web applications and mobile interactivity as media channels and marketing techniques, for promoting other artistic disciplines;
- Creating a sense of awareness by the use of state-of-the-art technology in their branding initiatives, and efficiently using the virtual space to identify and promote these initiatives;
- Supporting the development and presentation of training workshops.

Cultural Recreation

Cultural recreation is guided by an individual's own motivations and the pleasure they derive from them. Taking a course and practising an art are activities that develop the individual's personal expression, creativity and skills. Considering the technological era in which we live in, an individual uses different means today to access their recreational activities. Recreation itself, however, is still an effective method of cultural expression.

In relation to cultural recreation, the Town of Hawkesbury is committed to:

- Presenting a diverse range of programming and maintaining a fair pricing policy for cultural activities;
- Supporting the development of spaces that could accommodate organizations that offer cultural courses and workshops, by establishing a community centre to provide a better response to local needs;
- Supporting organizations that present cultural animation and awareness projects in public places and at heritage sites;
- Encouraging the next generation by offering young people opportunities to take courses and attend workshops with the objective of awakening or developing their creativity;
- Proposing mechanisms and techniques and the incorporation of tools that encourage the adoption of new technologies, including the creation of an Internet site to promote the artistic and cultural activities offered to and in the community.

Summary

For a community's cultural scene to be dynamic and vital, it must be the product of converging, determined and cooperative efforts, by all members of the community. The political commitment of its elected officials to the development of arts & culture becomes an essential contribution to the development of the life of the community as a whole.

This artistic and cultural engagement is based on what our predecessors have strived to develop. Our cultural policy, along with being a solid engagement for the future, demonstrates our common intent to share what makes us unique, while enriching our lives both as an individual and as a collective.

The Town of Hawkesbury would therefore like to thank the cultural organizations, local artists, the Recreation & Culture department staff, members of the community, the Mayor and the municipal council, who all collaborated in producing this very first *Municipal Cultural Policy*. Each of their names are listed at the end of the policy.

Catalysts

The Town of Hawkesbury offers its sincere thanks to the following individuals, who collaborated on the concepts and substance of this *Cultural Policy*.

Paula Assaly, Executive Director of the Centre culturel Le Chenail Inc.

Lynn Belle-Isle, CEO of the Hawkesbury Public Library

René Berthiaume, Mayor of Hawkesbury

Éric Charlebois, author, language professional (writing, translation, revision), Intersport and Maître Charle

Alain Fraser, author and Hawkesbury municipal councillor

Martin Lacelle, Cultural manager

Dominique Plouffe, Development Officer at 100% Actifs

Louise Potvin-Laliberté, President of Cercle Gascon II

Liette Valade, Director of Recreation and Culture Services