

# COMPREHENSIVE ARTS POLICY



The Corporation of the District of Saanich  
Planning Department  
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# District of Saanich Comprehensive Arts Policy

## PART 1

### Goal, Objectives and Policies

#### 1. Introduction and Vision

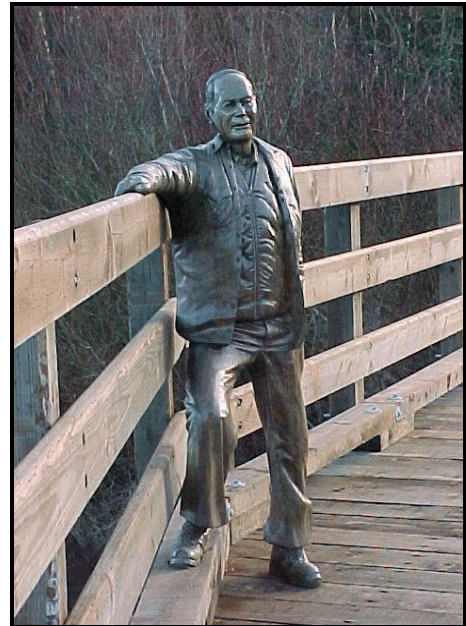
The arts are a part of all our lives and around us everywhere. The pictures we hang on our walls, the songs on the radio, and performances on television are examples we encounter daily. There are many other examples in public life. The built environment of our urban areas have elements of the arts incorporated into them through the design of buildings and the street environment. The voices of a choir, a dance ensemble or theatrical performances are yet other forms of the arts that we value.

Civic leaders understand the importance of creating a sense of place in the urban environment, and how citizens interact with that space. Today, society and its leaders want to take a more pro-active role in promoting good design and community arts in all forms. A comprehensive municipal arts policy can direct efforts at the regional and community level.

Saanich's Official Community Plan (OCP) addresses the arts through objectives and general policies. In 1992, to fulfill one of these policies, Council adopted an Art in Public Places policy. In 2000, Council chose to create a comprehensive arts policy to provide more specific policy direction and to house all arts related policies together. This involved: review of the OCP arts goal, objectives, and policies; update of the Art in Public Places policy, including a new jurying process; review of departmental policies; and investigation of Saanich's regional arts commitments.

When "arts" is mentioned, people generally think only of the visual arts. As most of us are aware, there are many kinds of arts. Indeed, using the word "arts" as opposed to "art", throughout this policy implies all types of the arts. While some areas of this policy seem to focus on the visual arts, this policy is all inclusive.

**Arts Vision:** Saanich as a lively and creative community accessible to artists, to a broad range of artistic expression and to the participation of all its residents.



*"Roy", Blenkinsop Bridge  
Artist: Nathan Scott*

## 2. Goal

The Comprehensive Arts Policy commits to the future. It seeks to invest in the community and professional arts, both locally and regionally, and to make Saanich a place rich in the arts.

While some aspects of the arts should be administered municipally, other aspects should be administered regionally. Municipal aspects include community arts, such as recreational programming and public art. Regional aspects include professional arts activities, most often taking place in the larger theatres and galleries located in downtown Victoria. Because of what the arts create and what they contribute to the community, there should be no question that the arts should receive municipal attention and resources. Saanich residents benefit from both municipal and regional arts.

## 3. Reasons for Supporting the Arts

**Quality of Life and Community Health.** A community with a high quality of life and overall health is one rich in the arts. For many communities, funding for the arts is a leftover consideration of budget discussions. For those communities that spend money on the arts, however, their citizens receive a greater array of civic opportunities, and thus become healthier and better developed individuals.

**Proximity to a Vital Provincial Capital and Regional Downtown.** With its close proximity to the capital city of British Columbia, Saanich has a unique opportunity. Many tourists from different areas around the province, the country, and the world visit this fair region, both for business and pleasure. These visitors arrive looking for locally based activities and diversions. What better type of diversion to provide for them than an artistic one.

**Jobs and Economic Development.** Many municipalities have developed economically due to their arts funding. Because the Capital Regional District is a destination location for many people, opportunities exist to provide these visitors with artistic experiences. There is no shortage of artists in the region who would welcome such a prospect. In addition to the direct jobs created, there would be many spin-off returns to other industries, especially the service industry. The film industry in Greater Victoria is still in its infancy and opportunities should be investigated.

**OCP Goal:** Encourage, promote, and support the arts and artists, municipally and regionally for the benefit and opportunity of all Saanich residents.



**Artistic Tourism.** Many communities have turned to the arts as a means of bringing their economy back to life. A local example is Chemainus, which turned their downtown into an outdoor mural gallery. The annual festivals that occur throughout the CRD are another example of the arts stimulating the local economy. Artistic tourism is linked to economic development, and is a sustainable, environmentally-friendly and local-made product. As well, artistic tourism brings the additional benefit of stimulating people spiritually and culturally, something that many other industries cannot claim to do.

#### 4. Objectives

The OCP goal statement can be expanded into more specific objectives that guide Municipal Departments and the Saanich Community in promoting the arts. The following objectives identify specific areas of interest in Saanich.

#### 5. Regional/Professional Arts

There are both regional and municipal interests in creating an arts policy. The Intermunicipal Committee (IMC) has been the main body administering the arts where interests cross boundaries for the four core municipalities of Esquimalt, Oak Bay, Victoria and Saanich. In 1989 and again in 2000, the IMC retained consultants to make recommendations regarding an arts policy for Greater Victoria.<sup>1</sup> Both reports recommended significant increases in funding and a regional body to oversee many arts functions. The 2000 report recommends that the Capital Regional District be this body, with the existing Arts Manager/Development Officer and Administrative Assistant as its staff. According to this report, the Arts Manager/Development Officer's job should include: providing technical assistance, advice and administration for arts policy and programming. In June 2001, the CRD Board adopted the bylaw to create a regional service to take over the arts related responsibilities from the IMC. The 2000 report also recognizes the importance of each municipality having its own arts policy.

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<sup>1</sup>The 1989 report was done by Kellogg Ernst and Whinney, and the 2000 report was done by Urban Aspects Consulting Group Ltd.



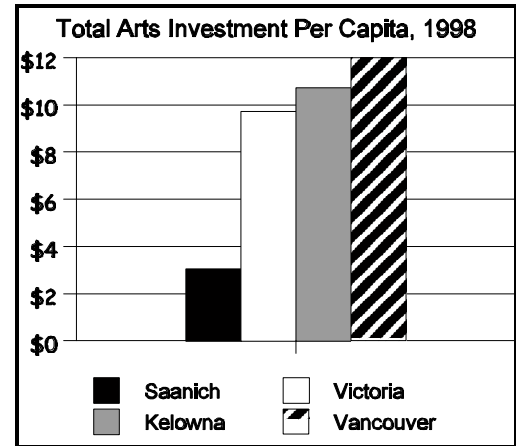
#### OCP Arts Objectives

- 4.1 To support artistic endeavours to promote growth and development of community spirit and identity.
- 4.2 To develop the social, emotional, and physical well being of the individual through access to a variety of artistic opportunities.
- 4.3 To foster public awareness, interest, and recognition of local and regional artistic talent.
- 4.4 To provide opportunities and resources for education, participation, and enjoyment of the arts throughout the District and the region.
- 4.5 To recognize and promote excellence and diversity within the artistic community including the professional and the amateur, the traditional and the innovative, the aspiring and the established.

The CRD is a unique region for many reasons. For purposes here, its unique characteristic is that a very small but central municipality contains the regional downtown. For this reason, it is very common for neighbouring residents to use the downtown's arts facilities, yet less common for their municipal taxes to contribute to them. Saanich is the largest municipality in this mix.

In 1998, Saanich's total regional arts investment was \$3.05 per capita.<sup>2</sup> Comparatively, Victoria invested \$9.73, Kelowna invested \$10.72, and Vancouver invested \$12.00.<sup>3</sup> In 1998, Saanich's per capita arts capital grants and expenditures was \$0.86, while Victoria's was \$6.94.<sup>4</sup> These grants and expenditures included one-time capital grants to arts organizations, capital support for the Royal Theatre and the McPherson Playhouse, and other infrastructure investments. This disparity can be seen in the accompanying graphs.

The 2000 arts report recommends that the level of operating grants funding from the 4-core municipalities be increased from the 2000 level of \$595,250 to \$1,845,250 by 2005. That is an overall increase of almost 310% over those five years, or a per capita contribution for operating and capital grants by Saanich of approximately \$7.72.<sup>5</sup> Over the years, several reports regarding regional arts facilities have been produced. In December 2000, a Performing Arts Facility Needs Analysis Report was completed. The report advised, "to create and implement a plan to develop arts facilities for the region over the next generation."



### Regional/Professional Arts Policies

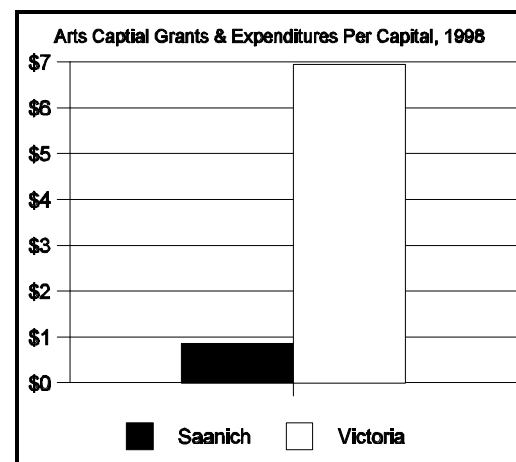
- 5.1 Allocate Municipal funds on an arms length basis to Greater Victoria arts organizations through the CRD.
- 5.2 Support regional arts programming and policy development with the CRD through the CRD Arts Committee, Arts Advisory Council, and Arts Development Office.
- 5.3 Support the creation and implementation of a plan to develop arts facilities for the region.
- 5.4 Identify ways in which Saanich can support increased commitment to a regional arts strategy and increased funding for regional arts development.
- 5.5 Develop close working relationships with other municipalities, school districts, Chambers of Commerce, Tourism Victoria, and other agencies to plan and coordinate arts initiatives.

<sup>2</sup>This figure includes IMC grants, grants by individual councils, Royal and McPherson operating support, civic arts programming, civic arts staff, public art, permissive exemptions for non-profit arts groups. This figure excludes one-time capital grants and expenditures. Source: Arts Development Office, Greater Victoria in "Culture", Tourism & the New Economy: Realizing Victoria's Opportunity", Steven Thorne, 1999.

<sup>3</sup>Source: Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Vancouver, Dept. of Parks and Leisure Service, City of Kelowna; Arts Development Office, Greater Victoria, in "Culture", Tourism & the New Economy: Realizing Victoria's Opportunity", Steven Thorne, 1999.

<sup>4</sup>Source: "Culture, Tourism & the New Economy: Realizing Victoria's Opportunity", Steven Thorne, 1999.

<sup>5</sup>If Saanich's per capita contribution to the IMC for operating and project grants, not including IMC grants and grants by individual councils, and excluding one-time capital grants and expenditures, was \$2.18 (Thorne, speech in 1999) in 1998 when the total IMC operating and projects grants were \$521,000 (Thorne, speech in 1999), then, assuming the same rate of contribution from Saanich in 2005 would be approximately \$7.72. Formula:  $\$521,000/\$2.18=\$1,845,250/\$7.72$ .



The report's conclusions with respect to long term needs included:

- New Art Gallery of Greater Victoria;
- New arena with 8,000 to 12,000 seats, capable of a 3,000 concert bowl configuration;
- New multi-purpose lyric theatre/concert hall with 1,800 to 2,000 seats;
- Royal Theatre with comfortable new seats; Royal Theatre rehabilitated as a concert hall to coincide with time when the supply of dates in the multi purpose lyric theatre/concert hall is inadequate to meet the demand;
- Renovated producing theatre with 300+ seats for theatre, dance, and music, and a studio lab of up to 100 seats.

All of these needs require funds and leadership to bring them to life.

## 6. Municipal/Community Arts

Community based arts occupy much more of Saanich's daily arts-related business than the regional arts. Municipal or community arts include: recreation programming; parks programming; garden art; venue establishment for performances and events (theatres and park space); annual events; special events; arts inventory and maintenance; Neighbourhood Development and Matching Grants; and the incorporation of artistic elements, including public art, in new developments through the planning and building processes.

The arts are an innate part of human nature. Access to and participation in the arts is integral to a healthy community. Historically, Saanich has demonstrated a strong commitment to community and municipal arts through various programs, events, and initiatives as listed in Appendix 3. Further development of the arts within Saanich's borders will affect individuals and the community in a fundamental and positive way.

### Municipal/Community Arts Policies

- 6.1 Integrate the arts into municipal policies, planning, operations, parks, and facilities.
- 6.2 Encourage community arts programming for a variety of disciplines through the Recreation Department, Parks Department and partnerships with other organizations.
- 6.3 Update the Art in Public Places policy as necessary.
- 6.4 Promote the use of parks and civic buildings for public art, performances, festivals, and exhibitions.
- 6.5 Support the commission or acquisition and display of the arts, including public art in civic buildings and outdoor areas including municipal parks and public streets.
- 6.6 Encourage private sector initiatives to provide arts facilities and improve arts services.
- 6.7 Encourage the display of arts in public spaces within private developments.
- 6.8 Consider floor space designated for non-profit arts activities as an amenity space under the density bonusing provisions of the *Local Government Act*.
- 6.9 Encourage arts programs in buildings that are readily accessible to the public such as malls, schools, libraries, and community centres.
- 6.10 Consider accommodating studio, rehearsal, and classroom or workshop space in commercial, industrial, and rural areas.
- 6.11 Support the inclusion of an artist as a member of the design team for major public and private projects.
- 6.12 Consider inclusion of representatives from the arts community on municipal advisory committees.
- 6.13 Consider providing venues in designated parks for arts performances and events.
- 6.14 Promote community awareness of the arts programs in the school system.
- 6.15 Continue to explore the options for establishing a community theatre.
- 6.16 Develop and implement departmental arts policies.
- 6.17 Create and implement a documentation and inventory policy for municipal artworks.

