



Town of
Amherst



Arts, Culture & Heritage Strategy





January 13, 2010

Steering Committee
Town of Amherst Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy

Dear Committee Members:

It has been a pleasure working with each of you on this most interesting project. I sincerely hope that the Strategy, as well as the information contained in the Technical Background Report, will help the Town realize the benefits of a greater focus on this sector of the economy. The process will work best as a partnership and I wish you success as you pursue those that will help implement the Strategy.

dmA staff have enjoyed getting to know your area of the Province and its long history. If we can be of further assistance with respect to this initiative, or others where our skills and experience may fit, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'W. Donovan'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final 'n'.

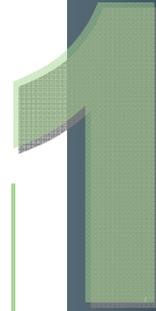
Wendy Donovan
Principal

Table of Contents

1.0	INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW	1
1.1	Definitions of Key Terms	2
2.0	CREATIVE COMMUNITIES	3
2.2	Situations to be Addressed	4
3.0	STRATEGY FRAMEWORK	6
3.1	Vision Statement	7
3.2	Outcomes of the Strategy	7
3.3	Principles for Implementing the Strategy	8
3.4	Combining the Framework Elements	8
3.5	Goals and Actions of the Strategy	9
3.6	Actions	9
3.6.1	Leadership and Governance	11
3.6.2	Economic Development and Planning	13
3.6.3	Facility Provision	15
3.6.4	Volunteer Support	17
3.6.5	Networking and Communication	19
3.6.6	Program and Product Development	21
3.6.7	Marketing and Promotion	23
4.0	IMPLEMENTATION	25
4.1	Costing and Implementation Considerations	25
4.2	Monitoring and Updating the Strategy	29
4.3	Measures: Five Year Target January 2015	30
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	31



Introduction & Overview



1.0 INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW



The Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy was one of Amherst's seven strategic initiatives for 2009. The Strategy focuses Municipal resources and leadership so that this sector is a significant contributor to Amherst's economic wellbeing, and a positive influence on the quality of life of all residents. The Strategy addresses the Town's role and responsibilities for arts, culture and heritage, and identifies the role that community businesses and organizations must play for Amherst to become a "creative centre".

The Strategy's development included consultation with Amherst residents, businesses, cultural "producers" and curators; documentation of cultural inventory, background reports, trends and best practices; consultation with "creative communities"; and analysis of gaps between the current situation and the desired future. The *Technical Background Report* documents this phase of the Strategy. Members of Council and senior administrators participated in a strategic planning workshop to discuss the strategy's framework and key directions. These were presented to the public on December 8th, 2009, Members of the public present were provided an opportunity to comment on the preliminary directions.

The Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy is outlined in four sections. Section 1.0 provides a brief overview of the process and defines key terms used in the Strategy. Section 2.0 describes the concept of a "creative community" and the relevance of this concept to the Town's Strategy for Arts, Culture and Heritage. Section 3.0 presents the Strategic Framework and specific actions. Section 4.0 outlines implementation including cost implications, monitoring and updating the Strategy.

1.1 Definitions of Key Terms



ART(s): Arts, as used in this Strategy refers to creative activities that may be either performing: (dance, instrumental or voice, drama etc.) visual: (painting, sculpting, pottery, ceramics etc.) material: (weaving, quilting etc.) media: (film making, recording etc.) literary (writing, poetry etc.), and crafts (woodworking etc.). No distinction is made regarding the nature of the "artist" - either professional or amateur.

HERITAGE: The term heritage refers to: *built heritage* – facilities or spaces (e.g., burial grounds, Dominion Building) that by virtue of age, and significance to the community's history, reflect the community's heritage; *natural heritage* – landforms or geological, paleontological sites of significance to the area's history; *material heritage* – artifacts that are conserved in a museum, documented in a library or other places, and events that present, interpret or reenact the Town's historic experience.

CULTURE: The term culture has many interpretations. It is sometimes synonymous with arts, although with a focus on fine arts or "high culture". Culture is also defined as *the shared attitudes, values, beliefs and practices of an institution, organization, or group*. It is with respect to the second use of the term that the artistic practices or food choices of a nationality (e.g., Balinese Dancing or Indian curry) are often included as part of multi-cultural festivals. A community's heritage is therefore an element of culture.

MULTI-CULTURAL: The term multi-cultural usually refers to groups whose members, broadly grouped by language, ethnicity, and country of origin, form a "collective" whose social and lifestyle practices and preferences differ from those of the current "dominant" culture. It is understood that multi-cultural practices may include distinct artistic forms; although it is the totality of the practices and preferences of these groups that form a distinct orientation.

Definitions related to the Service Framework are presented in section 3.0.



Creative Communities

2

2.0 CREATIVE COMMUNITIES



The Technical Background Report provides a detailed discussion of the attributes of a “creative community/creative centre” and the reader is referred to that document for greater detail. The Technical Background Report also presents a detailed analysis on the gaps that must be addressed for Amherst to become a “creative community/centre”.

The prerequisites for a “creative community” and a viable strategy for arts, culture and heritage are easily defined. They include: (1) strong appreciation on the part of elected officials and senior municipal staff that arts, culture and heritage contributes to a viable economy and enhanced quality of life - demonstrated through staffing, financial and policy support; (2) understanding that this sector crosses municipal political boundaries and, consequently, must involve cooperation with surrounding communities; (3) a well organized, cooperative arts “collective” that works collaboratively to achieve goals, develop products and promote opportunities.

“Creative centres” embody a number of critical factors:

- Strong civic leadership and policies that support development of the sector;
- Consideration and incorporation of the arts, and preservation of heritage in planning and development initiatives;
- Regular and productive communication among and between those involved in providing and supporting the sector;
- Strong, well connected volunteers, effective in their contribution to the development of arts, culture and preservation of heritage;
- A range of heritage, arts and cultural facilities, amenities and attractions;
- Strong and mutually beneficial ties to the local and regional economies and businesses; and
- Robust linkages with the local and regional tourism and hospitality sectors.

2.2 Situations to be Addressed



The following points reflect situations that must be addressed for Amherst to fully realize the economic and quality of life benefits of a strong arts, culture and heritage sector.

Leadership and Governance:

- The need for a dedicated staff position to oversee, facilitate and support the development of this sector.
- The need for an umbrella organization (Arts Council) that speaks with a unified “voice” to Council and the community.
- The need for a Council-endorsed vision for arts, culture and heritage, recognizing the benefits of this sector and the contributions it makes.
- Plans and policies that support and contribute to development of cultural and heritage resources and opportunities.

Communication, Networking, and Volunteers:

- Effective and coordinated communication between the Town, and organizations and individuals working and volunteering in this sector.
- The need for cooperation and communication among the various organizations and individuals involved in this sector.
- Expanded communication to the wider community about the opportunities and benefits of this sector.

Programming and Product Development

- Collaboration with other sectors e.g., agricultural and business sectors, hospitality, tourism, etc., to develop products and programs.
- Attention to the Town’s unique history and other attributes, such as the natural and geological heritage and the cultural and industrial history, to build a sense of identity.
- Collaboration between the Town of Amherst and the organizations, businesses, and industries in the wider region related to product development, joint-promotion, audience development, etc.



Marketing and Promotion

- The need for expanded marketing of arts and cultural amenities, resources, and opportunities.
- The need for dedicated media (e.g., a web site) showcasing arts, cultural and heritage events and opportunities in the Town and Region.
- Unified brand, slogan, and/or signage program that highlights the strengths of this sector and what is unique about Amherst.
- Coordination and collaboration necessary for joint promotion, to create a critical mass of opportunities, and to reach a wider audience.

Economic Development:

- Recognition and promotion of the benefits and contributions of this sector to the local economy.
- Collaboration among the organizations and businesses involved in the arts, the hospitality sector and local restaurants, and among other sectors such as agriculture, and non-arts related businesses.
- A critical mass of amenities and attractions in Amherst's downtown.



The Strategy

3

3.0 STRATEGY FRAMEWORK



Arts, culture and heritage are increasingly recognized as significant contributors to local economies. "... Creative Centres tend to be the economic winners of our age...with high concentrations of Creative Class people... and high concentrations of creative economic outcome. Creative centres provide the integrated eco-system or habitat where all forms of creativity – artistic and cultural, technological and economic – can take root and flourish."¹ A thriving arts, culture and heritage sector is good for the economy and many municipalities have, or are preparing, similar strategies to foster economic development & urban renewal. The Amherst *Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy* will assist Council and staff to support development of this sector.

The Vision, Goals and Actions articulated in the Strategy establish the overall direction for Municipal involvement in this sector. The Vision describes a desired future for Amherst with respect to its artistic, cultural and historic heritage. The Vision, along with the Goals, are designed to project and protect those aspects of art, culture and heritage that current residents value, and that will attract future residents, businesses and tourists to the Town.

The Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy will be an integral contributor to municipal decision-making, providing direction for resource allocation and annual priority setting.

Section 3.0 presents the overall strategic framework including the Vision Statement, Desired Outcomes, Goals, and Service Delivery Principles. Section 4.0 outlines Action steps and implementation implications to achieve the Vision, Outcomes and Goals.

¹ Florida, Richard. 2002. *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Basic Books. P. 218.



3.1 Vision Statement

The Vision describes a preferred future for Amherst with respect to arts, culture and heritage. Essentially, it describes a “creative” community establishing end-points and guide-posts. It describes a future that is realistic and attainable, but also optimistic. The Vision captures all that is positive and valued with respect to arts, culture and heritage today, and initiatives that contribute to a better future - what will exist if the actions described in the Strategy are pursued.

Arts, culture and heritage are important to Amherst’s economy and quality of life. Effective leadership, strong policy, and inviting events and opportunities, celebrate and protect the unique character of the Town; attract residents and tourists; and promote Amherst as the gateway to Nova Scotia’s culture and heritage.

3.2 Outcomes of the Strategy

Outcomes are the anticipated results of an effective Strategy and describe the positive implications or benefits to the Town of implementing the Strategy. The following outcomes are projected to emerge as a direct consequence of the efforts and resources applied to the arts, culture and heritage sector.

- A vibrant and diversified economy.
- An interesting and active downtown.
- An increase in visitors and tourists to Amherst.
- A Town attractive to new residents and exciting for all residents.
- A business sector connected to and supportive of arts, culture and heritage.
- Many volunteers engaged in the delivery of arts, culture and heritage.
- Opportunities for personal growth and development.
- Wide appreciation of the contribution arts, cultural and heritage makes to the wellbeing of the Town.
- Development of authentically “Amherst” arts, culture and heritage.
- Preservation and celebration of Amherst’s built and cultural heritage.



3.3 Principles for Implementing the Strategy

Principles describe the manner in which the Strategy *will be implemented*. They commit the Town to pursuing improved arts, culture and heritage resources and outcomes by acting in a particular manner that benefits the community, is effective in realizing the Vision, and does not adversely affect other community interests.

- Through **Collaboration** – between and among the Town, local and regional businesses, the hospitality sector, community groups, area institutions and residents;
- Through **Partnerships** – that benefit all those who contribute resources;
- Through **Engagement** – of the community and partners to build support and awareness of benefits;
- Through **Integration** - with other plans, policies and initiatives of the Town and its partners; and
- Through **Sustainable Practices** – so that resources are available over the long term.

3.4 Combining the Framework Elements

The Vision, Outcomes and Principles are key elements of the Strategy. Together they describe a framework within which goals (and actions) are implemented. The Vision is a statement of the desired future augmented by clear outcomes – when the outcomes are achieved the vision will be realized. The Principles describe the manner in which goals will be accomplished. All Goal Statements should be understood to fit within this framework. While this Strategy is the Town's – in other words it describes what the *Town* wishes and will do – it describes a process that is collaborative, sustainable, and engaging. To achieve the Vision and the desired outcomes the Town must engage and partner with many groups, businesses and organizations and the community. The corollary to this of course is that the Town cannot achieve these outcomes on its own.



3.5 Goals and Actions of the Strategy

Goals are broad statements that define attainable accomplishments. Goals bridge the gap between the present and the preferred future described in the Vision. Goals capture the most important directions to be pursued for Amherst to become a “creative centre”.

- **Leadership and Governance** – Provide leadership and governance in a manner that enables Amherst to become a creative centre.
- **Economic Development and Planning** – Through effective planning, policy development, and collaboration, enhance the art, culture and heritage sector’s contribution to economic development.
- **Facility Provision** – Support access to spaces that accommodate arts and cultural programs, activities and events, and that preserve, celebrate and share the Town’s history and achievements.
- **Volunteer Support** – Contribute to the development of a strong and sustainable volunteer sector that actively contributes to the Strategy’s implementation.
- **Networking and Communication**– Contribute to effective communication and collaboration among partners, providers, and audiences.
- **Programming and Product Development** - Support arts, culture and heritage experiences and opportunities that reflect the diversity of this sector and the authentic creativity, culture and heritage of the Town.
- **Marketing and Promotion** – Promote Amherst as a community in which arts, culture and heritage flourish and are celebrated.

3.6 Actions

Goals are fairly broad by definition (e.g., “Provide leadership and governance in a manner that enables Amherst to become a creative centre.”) For each Goal there is one or more specific Action(s) that must be undertaken in a specific manner to achieve the goal. The Actions identified in the Strategy are all important and collectively support the Goals.

Actions should not be mistaken for activities. This is particularly the case for goals such as *Program and Product Development* and *Marketing and Promotion*. For example, while the Action: “Facilitate the development and



delivery of festivals, events, and programs that celebrate Amherst's cultural, industrial, and social history and development" is an important Action (by virtue of the fact that it focuses programs on elements that are authentically Amherst), there are many activities that could be included as part of this Action. Parades that highlight important eras in the Town's history, interpretive displays at the museum, the Four Fathers Festival etc., are but a few of these activities. This Strategy does not identify, nor realistically could it, all the *activities* that could be undertaken related to a specific Action. These activities will develop through the creative and collaborative efforts of the Town, the community, and all those sectors in the Town and region who wish Amherst to become a creative centre.

The number of specific activities may be limited by available resources. Some activities (e.g., hosting the East Coast Music Awards) may happen one year but not for many years following. The important point is that the seven Goals are constant, and Actions related to these Goals, while more specific, are also important if the Town is to achieve its Vision. The activities that can be accommodated by each Action, may be many, may change from year to year, may only happen occasionally and are open to the creativity and resourcefulness of the community at large. Actions must be measurable. All Actions are assigned priority defined as:

High (H) • To be acted upon immediately and fully implemented in 1-2 years.

Medium (M) • To be initiated as soon as possible but within the five-year time frame of the Strategic Plan.

Ongoing (O) • To be acted on currently and on an ongoing basis.

While it is understood that the Actions will be implemented, as warranted, by all municipal departments, a lead department or individual has been designated for each Action. The "Lead" would assume responsibility for the Action but other municipal staff or external agencies and interests may assist with implementation.

3.6.1 Leadership and Governance



Effective leadership and governance is the most important consideration in the development of a thriving arts, cultural and heritage sector in Amherst. This Strategy supports a stronger role for the Town in providing the overall administrative and policy framework to support this sector's development. It identifies the Town's key role as facilitation, with policy development, communication, administration of funds, development and negotiation of agreements, and partnership development all part of this process. This role does not assume direct service delivery on the part of the Town; rather it ensures that the Town is able to work with its partners (e.g., volunteer organizations, arts and cultural organizations and businesses) to make Amherst a creative centre.

Goal Statement	Provide leadership and governance in a manner that enables Amherst to become a creative centre.
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Council endorsement of this Strategy is the first step in developing the community's awareness of the value of this sector and Council's commitment to its enhancement. A cornerstone of this Strategy is Action #1, calling for Town Staff and Council work with CREDA and others to secure staff resources to support the Strategy's implementation. This Action recognizes that there may not currently be the staff capacity (based on current workload and experience) to provide the required support to develop this sector to its potential. Actions in this section also call for financial investment in arts, culture and heritage based on a strong commitment to partnering with other agencies and organizations, the private sector and other levels of government where feasible.

Actions:	Leadership and Governance	Lead	Priority	Considerations
1.	Secure Council endorsement of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy.	Director of Planning	H	Will demonstrate Council's commitment and support
2.	Secure staff resources to support implementation of the Strategy.	Town Administration and Council	H	Through collaboration with CREDA and / or other appropriate groups.
3.	Negotiate agreements for access to appropriate spaces and venues for cultural and artistic activities and events.	Town Administration/ Arts Co-ordinator	H, O	As required.
4.	Develop a "grants to groups program", a process for distributing grants, and a communication process for informing eligible groups of procedures and timelines.	Arts Co-ordinator	H, O	Process development is a necessary first step. Will consolidate existing grants, and increase these to stimulate growth.
5.	Encourage local and area businesses to develop complementary initiatives to promote Amherst as a cultural centre.	Arts Co-ordinator	O	As opportunities arise.
6.	Review Municipal Plan to identify policies and/or sections that can be strengthened to support the development and strength of the arts, culture and heritage sector.	Director of Planning	M	May also involve development of new policies.
7.	Develop an annual Business Plan to outline current year initiatives and priorities, and anticipated outcomes.	Arts Co-ordinator	H	At such time as <i>an arts council</i> becomes a viable organization this activity would be transferred to or shared with that group.
8.	Work closely with other Town and community staff (e.g., Library, Museum) to develop and co-ordinate programs and initiatives.	Arts Co-ordinator	O	Supports collaboration and integrates the Town's cultural and heritage infrastructure.

3.6.2 Economic Development and Planning



This Strategy will ensure that Amherst’s arts, cultural and heritage programs, activities and events contribute in a significant way to the Town’s economic development. This will be achieved through effective planning, policy development, and collaboration among the organizations and businesses involved in the arts, the hospitality sector, local restaurateurs, those involved in downtown beautification or improvement, and between the Town and its surrounding region.

Goal Statement	Through effective planning, policy development, and collaboration, enhance the art, culture and heritage sector’s contribution to economic development.
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The Actions identified in this section call for arts, culture, and heritage to be considered in future development and redevelopment of facilities and spaces; for related policy development; and for stronger collaboration with local and regional businesses and industries to enhance arts, cultural and heritage opportunities and their associated impacts. The Actions included in the following table are the viewed as the most critical in the timeframe of this Strategy. Although relevant to economic development as well, specific facility-related Action steps have been included in the Facility Provision section.

Actions: Economic Development and Planning	Lead	Priority	Considerations
1. Work with CREDA to make connections with regional businesses, institutions and industries to support the arts, culture and heritage sector and the business and hospitality sector in Amherst.	Arts Co-ordinator	H	High priority for Arts Co-ordinator and for other Town Staff as appropriate and required.
2. Work with local businesses and the hospitality sector to develop a critical mass of complementary experiences (e.g., shopping, recreation, arts and cultural activities, fine dining, wineries) in Amherst.	Director of Economic Development	H	Involvement of many Town departments
3. Develop a policy for the <i>dedication, preservation, and commemoration of historically significant infrastructure</i> .	Director of Planning	H	See also Marketing and Promotion, Action 1.
4. Develop a signage program for downtown Amherst demarcating a downtown Arts, Culture and Heritage District or Cultural Precinct and identifying individual attractions and amenities.	Director of Planning / Arts Co-ordinator	M, O	Could be part of the planning process described in Action #1, Marketing and Promotion.
5. Develop a <i>Public Art Policy</i> and establish a public art program. Work with the local artists, the CAC, downtown businesses and the local business association to implement the program.	Arts Co-ordinator	M, O	Collaborative effort.
6. Ensure that the Goals and Action Steps of this Strategy are considered and reflected in the Town's Downtown Strategy.	Director of Planning	O	Supports the principle of integration.

3.6.3 Facility Provision



This Strategy supports the continued provision of the spaces and places in Amherst that can accommodate arts and cultural programs, activities and events, and will help to ensure that a range of spaces continue to be available to the organizations and individuals providing these services.

Goal Statement

Support access to spaces that accommodate arts and cultural programs, activities and events; and that preserve, celebrate and share the Town's history and achievements.

Facilities and spaces that support and showcase arts, culture and heritage are important to the development of this sector in Amherst. Many of these spaces already exist in the Town, but because of lack of awareness, access agreements, policies, and practices, they are not accessible to the organizations and individuals involved in providing arts and cultural services. Future facilities in Amherst will be developed with consideration to the spaces that can support arts, culture and heritage endeavours. The following Action steps help to address these issues.

Actions: Facility Provision	Lead	Priority	Considerations
1. Develop and maintain an inventory of arts, cultural and heritage amenities, attractions, events, human and physical resources, spaces and places of interest (cultural mapping).	Arts Co-ordinator	H, O	Will also support community engagement.
2. For all future municipal facility acquisitions, development and redevelopment, incorporate appropriate <i>spaces</i> to support arts, cultural, and heritage opportunities.	All Town Departments	O	Should be considered during the development stage for all new/redeveloped facilities and outdoor spaces.
3. In future downtown development and redevelopment, investigate opportunities aimed at developing artist live/work spaces, galleries, and studios.	Director of Planning	O	To be considered as part of the Downtown Strategy.
4. In future downtown development and redevelopment, investigate opportunities to provide appropriate space for an indoor/outdoor arts and cultural market.	Director of Economic Development	O	To be considered as part of the Downtown Strategy.
5. Develop incentives related to heritage dedication, preservation and commemoration for infrastructure and amenities in private ownership.	Director of Planning	O	Related to Action 1. and considered part of Heritage Policy Development.
6. When prerequisites are in place, undertake a feasibility study to assess need for and financial viability of an arts and cultural facility in the Town's downtown.	Director of Planning	TBD (see prerequisite note)	Prerequisites include a viable and co-ordinated arts community, and demonstrated stakeholder and community demand.

3.6.4 Volunteer Support



In Amherst, volunteers are the cornerstone of most of the arts, cultural, and heritage activities, events and programs that benefit residents and tourists alike. An important goal of this Strategy is securing necessary resources to support volunteer viability and development, and to enhance the contribution that volunteers can make in the community.

Goal Statement

Contribute to development of a strong and sustainable volunteer sector that actively contributes to the Strategy's implementation.

The Actions identified in this Strategy call for more collaboration, networking and organization among the various artists, arts and cultural organizations, and related businesses, to the benefit of all. Facilitating the development of a Community Arts Council will be one of the key responsibilities of the recommended Staff Position. Other Action steps noted below will help strengthen the volunteer sector in support of this Strategy.

Actions: Volunteer Support	Lead	Priority	Considerations
1. Facilitate development of a Community Arts Council (CAC).	Arts Co-ordinator	H	With wide local and regional representation.
2. Work with area arts, culture and heritage groups and organizations to support recruitment, training, recognition and retention of a viable volunteer sector.	Arts Co-ordinator / CAC	O	Assume these responsibilities can over time be transferred to the CAC.
3. Develop events to recognize the role of volunteers in development of this sector.	Arts Co-ordinator/ CAC	O	In partnership with others.

3.6.5 Networking and Communication



This Strategy calls for the Town to assume a stronger role in development of effective networks and improved collaboration among the various arts, cultural and heritage service providers. As well the Strategy encourages development of effective partnerships among these organizations and with other sectors, and enhanced communication within this sector and to the greater community. Communication goes hand-in-hand with improved leadership, and this Strategy recognizes a strong leadership role for the Town in contributing to effective communication and collaboration, to the benefit of all.

Goal Statement	Contribute to effective communication and collaboration among partners, providers, and audiences.
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Creating awareness and getting the message out regarding opportunities available, the benefits of arts and culture, and the strengths and successes of the many organizations and individuals involved in this sector are necessary first steps in improving communication. The first few Actions described in the following table are aimed at improving awareness, creating buy-in, and establishing linkages among the many organizations and businesses involved. Each Action may involve a number of distinct activities. For example, Action #2 could involve an annual workshop with local hoteliers, bed and breakfast owners, restaurateurs, and art and cultural event and program organizers, to work towards establishing complementary activities, “themed” packages, tours of similar attractions and activities, etc.

Actions: Networking and Communication	Lead	Priority	Considerations
1. Develop and maintain a web page to showcase local and regional arts, culture and heritage amenities, attractions, events, programs and opportunities.	Arts Co-ordinator / CAC	H	Will be supported by the cultural mapping exercise described in Action 1, Facilities.
2. Develop and maintain an up-to-date contact list of artisans and crafters; arts, cultural and heritage organizations; hospitality and tourism sector providers, downtown businesses and attractions.	Arts Co-ordinator	H	Part of the cultural mapping exercise. Should be incorporated in Action 1 web page.
3. Involve businesses and hospitality providers in the promotion of arts, cultural and heritage events, programs and opportunities.	Arts Co-ordinator	M	In partnership with CREDA and others.
4. Establish protocols and procedures for informing the local media of upcoming and ongoing arts, cultural and heritage activities, programs, and events.	Arts Co-ordinator	M	Will also involve Town staff involved in marketing.
5. Develop collaborative initiatives between the Town's schools and the arts, culture and heritage community.	Arts Co-ordinator	O	Arts education is important for community buy-in.
6. Monitor and evaluate the influence of emerging arts, cultural and heritage events and opportunities; and communicate the scope and benefits of the sector to Council, businesses, and the community at large.	Arts Co-ordinator	O	In partnership with others.

3.6.6 Program and Product Development



This Strategy supports additional program and product development to reflect a diversity of interests and talents, encourage participation at all levels, build partnerships and opportunities, and contribute to an sense of identify unique to Amherst.

Goal Statement

Support arts, culture and heritage experiences that reflect the diversity of this sector and the authentic creativity, culture and heritage of the Town.

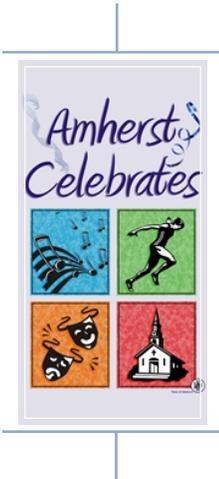
The Action steps described in the following table are directed to program and product development that builds on existing successes and develops arts, cultural and heritage experiences that are unique and authentic to Amherst. They encourage collaboration and partnerships to highlight Amherst's unique strengths, culture and heritage and contribute to a sense of place and identity. As discussed in the preamble, for every Action described in the following table there are numerous related activities. For example, Action #1 could lead to programs and events focused on Amherst as the Maritime centre for violin-making, or on the Town's Acadian history and roots. The Action steps outlined in the following table should be considered a jumping off point from which the full creative energies and talents of individuals, organizations, and businesses can flourish and grow.

The *Lead* responsible for these is identified as the Arts Co-ordinator. It should be understood that, when a community arts council is in place and viable, many of these activities would be managed by or with that organization. Some case study "creative communities" consulted for this Strategy have in fact transferred a formerly municipal position (e.g., the arts co-ordinator) to the local arts council.

Actions: Program and Product Development	Lead	Priority	Considerations
1. Facilitate the development of festivals, events, and programs focused on Amherst's unique cultural, industrial, and social history and development.	Arts Co-ordinator	O	For example, Acadian history could be profiled in Amherst.
2. Work with the Town's multi-cultural communities to celebrate and experience the rich cultural diversity and cultural history of Amherst.	Arts Co-ordinator	O	Involvement of cultural and heritage organizations.
3. Build on successful local and regional events by facilitating and supporting back-to-back events and activities, to encourage visitors to "stay another day".	Arts Co-ordinator	O	For example, create additional textile-related events during the Fiber Arts Festival.
4. Work with the Town's hospitality sector and local businesses to encourage visitors to regional geological, paleontological, anthropological, and natural history sites, to shop and stay in Amherst.	Arts Co-ordinator	O	See Marketing and Promotion for further discussion about packaging attractions.
5. Develop a coordinated and well-defined approach to encouraging and supporting buskers, performance artists, street bands, chalk artists, as part of existing and future festivals and events in Amherst.	Arts Co-ordinator	M	Involvement of CREDA, downtown businesses and business associations.
6. Work with local and regional theatre groups to animate historical figures and events of relevance to Amherst and incorporate performances into existing festivals and special events.	Arts Co-ordinator	M	Could be transferred to the CAC once initial facilitation is achieved.

3.6.7 Marketing and Promotion

Building on the necessary “first steps” discussed in communication and networking (creating “buy-in” and an awareness of the economic and quality of life benefits), this Strategy calls for improved marketing and promotion to contribute to a thriving arts, culture and heritage sector in Amherst.



Goal Statement

Promote Amherst as a community in which arts, culture and heritage flourish and are celebrated.

The Actions described in the following table are designed to promote Amherst to local residents, the surrounding region, and visitors to Nova Scotia. They describe the specific planning processes, marketing tools and techniques, and promotional products that will help position Amherst as a cultural centre. All of these Actions assume collaboration and a pooling of resources among affected parties, to create a critical mass of attractions and opportunities and effectively reach a wide audience.

As with Program and Product Development, Actions related to Marketing and Promotion could encompass a wide variety of activities. There was some discussion related to Action #6 about initiatives that might help Amherst attract events of a regional, provincial or national nature. To date Amherst has not been able to do this with a high degree of success. Incentives may be needed to encourage groups and events of this nature to stop in Amherst. Attracting such events will benefit from a critical mass of *experiences* (by experiences we refer to not only activities, but pleasant places to eat, places to shop, attractive public spaces, etc.) within the Town - and will ultimately contribute to that critical mass. Priming the pump by actively attracting groups that now pass by Amherst will ultimately contribute to the overall goal.

Actions:	Marketing and Promotion	Lead	Priority	Considerations
1. Prepare a Branding and Communications Study to create a unique Amherst “brand” and design promotional materials, signage programs, and communication materials.	Marketing Co-ordinator	H	Study should develop the brand and design elements for promotional materials, signage, and communications materials.	
2. Develop a way-finding signage program to promote and advertise Amherst as the “gateway” to Nova Scotia’s culture and heritage.	Director of Planning	M	Could be incorporated in the study described in Action #1.	
3. Develop an interpretive signage program for significant historic and cultural elements and features in Amherst.	Director of Planning	M	As above. See also related Actions in Networking and Communication.	
4. Develop a brochure offering a “packaged” experience, including events and festivals, sites and activities, and accommodations, food, and wine of interest to the arts and cultural consumer.	Arts Co-ordinator/ Marketing Co-ordinator	M	Marketing and Promotion will be a collaborative effort.	
5. Develop “themed” tours of local and regional arts cultural and heritage attractions, events, and activities.	Arts Co-ordinator	M	Through cooperation with CREDA and the CAC.	
6. Work to attract provincial, regional, and national arts and heritage conferences, exhibitions and special events.	Arts Co-ordinator	O	Through cooperation with CREDA and the CAC.	



Implementation

4

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION



The final section of the Strategy identifies the anticipated costs, an implementation schedule, and a process for updating and monitoring the implementation of this Strategy.

4.1 Costing and Implementation Considerations

Table 4.1 outlines staff time and costs associated with the Actions of this Strategy. Financial implications are based on current industry averages for various studies and activities, and averages for staff classified at a similar level. One of the most important indicators in this list is the number of Actions that require *staff time*. This time is not easily quantified but a review of the type of activities that would be involved in these Actions as a group strongly indicates the need for a dedicated staff position to manage these responsibilities.

Table 4.2 outlines those tasks with specific (non-staff time) costs. As noted above these costs are based on industry averages and will be influenced by current market and scope of Actions taken.

Costs identified should not be assumed to be fully funded by the Town of Amherst. Some costs may be supported through grants from other levels of government or other agencies, community fund-raising, partner contributions, sponsorships and donations, among other means. One of the advantages of the staff position is the ability to seek out other funding sources.

Costs are indicated in current year costs with no year over year escalation.

Table 4.1: Staff and Operating Cost Considerations

ACTION	COST
Leadership and Governance	
1. Council Endorsement	Staff Time
2. Arts Co-ordinator	\$50,000 ² annual
3. Negotiate Agreements	Staff Time
4. Grants to Groups Process Development and Funding	\$20,000 ³ annual
5. Encourage Complementary Initiatives	Staff Time
6. Municipal Plan Review and Related Policy Development	Staff Time
7. Develop an annual Business Plan to outline current year initiatives and priorities, and anticipated outcomes.	Staff Time
8. Work closely with other Town and community staff to develop and co-ordinate programs and initiatives.	Staff Time
Economic Development and Planning	
1. Connections within Region	Staff Time
2. Connections with Business/hospitality	Staff Time
3. Policy for Heritage Infrastructure	Staff Time
4. Heritage District/ Cultural Precinct Signage Program	\$20,000 ⁴
5. Public Art Policy and Implementation	Staff Time
6. Collaboration with Downtown Strategy	Staff Time
Facility Provision	
1. Facility and Space Inventory, Cultural Mapping	Staff Time
2. Appropriate Spaces in Future Development	Staff Time / Costs Undefined
3. Artist Live/Work and Gallery Space in Downtown	Staff Time / Costs Undefined
4. Indoor Outdoor Cultural Market Space	Staff Time / Costs Undefined
5. Incentives for Heritage in Private Ownership	Staff Time
6. Long-term Facility Feasibility Study	\$75,000

² This would be an annual cost

³ New funding, not including existing funds totaling approximately \$30K annually for Victorian Christmas and Four Father's Festival

⁴ Assuming planning process developed as part of branding study. This amount could be allocated over several years. See MP Action #1.

ACTION	COST
Volunteer Development	
1. Develop Community Arts Council	Staff Time
2. Volunteer Development	Staff Time
3. Volunteer Recognition	Staff Time
Networking and Communication	
1. Web-Page Development	\$5,000 start-up + \$1K annually
2. Contact-List, Networking	Staff Time
3. Business Promotion of Arts and Culture	Staff Time
4. Media Relations	Staff Time
5. Arts Education Partnerships	Staff Time
6. Communicate Benefits	Staff Time
Product Development	
1. Festival and Event Development	Staff Time
2. Cultural Heritage Programs/Events	Staff Time
3. Stay Another Day Initiatives	Staff Time
4. Focus for Regional Tourists	Staff Time
5. Street Performance Process Planning	Staff Time
6. Animated Performances	Staff Time
Marketing and Promotion	
1. Cultural Branding and Communications Study	\$35,000
2. Way-Finding Signage Program	\$100,000 ⁵
3. Interpretive Signage Program	\$10,000 ⁶
4. "Packaged" Tours/Stays	Staff Time
5. "Themed" Tour Development	Staff Time
6. Conference and Event Special Event Attraction	Staff Time

⁵ Assumes that this will build on the branding study and will be implemented over a 3-5 year timeframe @ \$10,000 to \$15,000 annually. This is also part of the Downtown Strategy Study and is not a separate item from signage programs noted in that study.

⁶ Also allocated annually over a 3 to 5 year timeframe

Those actions which have specific costs (other than staff time) associated with them are summarized in Table 4.2. These costs are high-level assessments based on the experiences of other communities. However, local wage rates and costs for outsourcing (e.g., where a consultant will be brought in to assist) must be assessed in advance of each Action. The scope of an Action must also be taken into consideration. For example, the Action related to web site development provides outsourced costs for a moderate web site and costs for annual monitoring and hosting. Similarly the annual amount contributed to way-finding signage, and heritage signage will be influenced by the number and type of signs. The feasibility study assumes an extensive needs assessment, business plan and facility assessment and capital costing. Costs are in 2010 dollars.

Table 4.2: 5 -Year Cost Summary

Page Reference	Actions	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
P. 12 Action # 2	Arts Co-ordinator	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
P. 12 Action # 4	Grants to Groups – Existing Funding	\$35,000 ⁷	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
	Grants to Group – New Funding ⁸	\$20,000	\$20,000	20,000	\$20,000	20,000
P. 14 Action # 4	Heritage District/ Cultural Precinct Signage Program		\$10,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
P. 16 Action # 6	Facility Feasibility Study					\$75,000* ⁹
P. 20 Action # 1	Web Page Development	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
P. 24 Action # 1	Cultural Branding and Communications Study		\$35,000			
	Ongoing Marketing Costs	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$15,000
P. 24 Action # 2	Way-Finding Signage Program ¹⁰	\$30,000	\$40,000	\$30,000		
P. 24 Action # 3	Interpretive Signage Program	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	TBD	TBD
		\$155,000	\$206,000	\$160,000	\$120,000	\$201,000

⁷ Includes current activities such as Victorian Christmas, Four Fathers Festival

⁸ While a process of approving eligible projects must be developed it is strongly recommended that these grants be viewed as seed funding on a decreasing 3 – 5 year period so that community capacity and group self sufficiency is built.

⁹ If prerequisites are in place, earlier consideration to moving this item forward.

¹⁰ These costs are cross referenced from the Downtown Strategy

4.2 Monitoring and Updating the Strategy



The Vision described in this Strategy represents the desired future for the Town. The Vision will be relevant throughout the life of the Strategy. The Goals are more specific, and define attainable accomplishments that will allow the Town to realize the Vision bridging the gap between present conditions and the desired future. Goals should be formally reviewed by Council annually to ensure they continue to reflect priorities as the Town works towards its desired future.

Actions are more specific still, and should be reviewed and updated annually by staff to determine those that have been accomplished, to allocate appropriate funds to their implementation, and to make adjustments and additions as required.

After five years, the Strategy should be formally updated to ensure that it still reflects the desired future and priorities for the Town.

In addition to regularly monitoring and updating the Strategy and the individual Actions, formal procedures should be adopted to ensure the Strategy is used in the ongoing management of municipal affairs. These procedures should describe a process for staff reporting and incorporating implementation priorities into the annual budget process.

This Strategic Plan includes over 40 associated Actions. In some cases, these represent one-time tasks with a defined time for completion, and a measurable result. In most cases, the Actions represent initiatives or processes that will be ongoing over time or as resources allow. In addition to the regular monitoring noted above, it will be imperative that the Town identify a number of performance measures that track the desired outcomes of the Strategy. These measures will generally be quantifiable and measurable, i.e., one policy developed, one additional event reflecting the culture/heritage of Amherst. The performance measures will monitor the Town's success in expanding opportunities, promoting events and attractions, and communicating successes. While these measures will be developed, reviewed and updated on a regular basis, initially the following measures, baselines (current

situation) and targets have been identified for monitoring the key accomplishments associated with the Strategy's implementation.



4.3 Measures: Five Year Target January 2015

- Arts Co-ordinator person in place
- Grants to Groups Process Developed and Funding in place
- Community Arts Council in place
- Business Plan for CAC developed
- Cultural Mapping exercise completed
- Web Page launched
- Media Relations plan developed
- Cultural Branding and Communications Study completed
- Heritage Infrastructure Policy in place
- Public Art Policy in place
- Heritage District/Cultural Precinct Signage Program planned, completed and signage in place
- Interpretive Signage Program planned, developed and implemented
- Way-Finding Signage Program planned, developed and implemented
- One or more new access agreement(s) for arts, cultural, heritage space negotiated and successfully implemented
- Minimum one new "Packaged" opportunity organized and promoted through a brochure
- Minimum one new "Themed" tour developed and promoted
- Minimum one "stay-another-day" activity implemented

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The Town of Amherst Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy was created under the direction of a Steering Committee composed of the following individuals:

- Dale Fawthrop Councillor, Town of Amherst
- Andrew Fisher Planner, Town of Amherst
- Rhonda Kelly Executive Director, CREDA
- Jason MacDonald Director Planning & Engineering Town of Amherst

The efforts of Steering Committee - who provided ongoing input to the planning process including: the gathering of background information, review of report drafts, and support of and contribution to the consultation process, is acknowledged. The active involvement of Committee Members ensured the accuracy and completeness of information and analysis. The efforts of this group was sincerely appreciated.

Senior staff of the Town's administration and Members of Council participated enthusiastically in the strategy planning workshop. Individual members of the community and arts, culture and heritage representatives also contributed their time and comments to the development of this Strategy. The efforts of these participants provided valuable information to the process.

We are appreciative of the input and assistance of all those who contributed to the development of the Town of Amherst's Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy.

W Donovan
Principal
dmA Planning & Management Services

January 2010